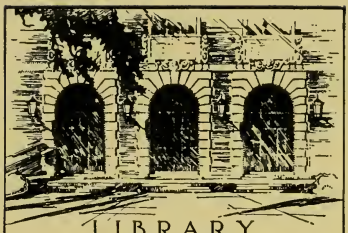

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THE CAMISARD.

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CAMISARD;

OR, THE

PROTESTANTS OF LANGUEDOC:

A Tale

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

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THE

CAMISARD;

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PROTESTANTS OF LANGUEDOC.

CHAPTER I.

Met.—Alas! good fellow, what is my offence?
Hub.—You are convicted, most noble sir,
Of uttering truths, which, but for your audacious tongue,
Giving them sound and entrance to men's ears,
Might soon have faded into soft forgetfulness.
Therefore am I ordered, by silence and hard fare,
To curb your fiery zeal.

School for Discretion.

THE following day, Madame Durand, who regretted not having further questioned the Pilgrim, employed Isidore to seek him out; but no one had seen him, and it appeared evident that he had not

visited the village, though so near to it. She was, therefore, forced for the present to suspend her curiosity, and subjects of more importance rendered this not very difficult. Summer was fast approaching, and before its close the period was fixed for the trial, by which the Parliament of Montpellier was to decide whether a marriage celebrated by a Protestant Minister, between a Catholic and a Protestant, could be admitted as valid, since by law it was contrary to the fifteenth article of the revocation of the edict of Nantes; and, consequently, whether the large possessions left by the late Baroness de Courcy belonged to her husband, or returned to her family. This important question interested thousands besides those more immediately concerned in its discussion; and a variety of passions gave birth to as many various conjectures.

The illiberal, who always consider whatever is new as dangerous, pronounced such a thing incompatible with the safety of the state; the more enlightened hoped the time was arrived when injustice would no longer be looked upon as necessary; the oppressed blushed at the recollection that such a question still remained to be canvassed; and the oppressors redoubled their bitterness in proportion as they apprehended that the present decision would lay it at rest for ever. Madame Durand's advocate had suggested the expediency of endeavouring to procure the testimony of the aged Monsieur Brunel, who had performed the marriage ceremony, and of any other witnesses who might be still living: many had declared the Pastor to be dead, but others only believed that after his daughter's misfortune he had gone into more strict retire-

ment. Nothing is more difficult than to trace the steps of those whose path is marked only by poverty and sorrow: but determined to make the needful researches, she deemed it the best plan to spend some part of the summer in the Mountains, where, if still alive, he was most probably to be heard of; nor was Madame Durand sorry for this excuse to separate Rose, not only from the persecutions of Monsieur Vidal, but from the assiduities of Isidore, which would necessarily give him umbrage. It was difficult to restrain the ardour of his temper, and on being made acquainted with the share Vidal had in the ruin of Madame Durand's family, his detestation for him frequently broke out in a manner that made them tremble, as his friends well knew the impolicy of provoking a man who was capable of any act of baseness or violence. Isidore

could not be taught that discretion is often needful towards the vilest; and his departure for Germany, which was to follow theirs, became every day more desirable. These plans were laid during the Consul's absence at the Priory, which was long enough to irritate him still further not only against the Prior, whom his malice could not reach, but against all those who were likely to rejoice in his mortification. The Prior had sent a party to the Mountains, who returned without success. After a strict search, nothing was found in Brother Gabriel's cell to warrant suspicion, and the Hermit was represented as full of astonishment and holy zeal against the malicious and ill-advised informer; neither could they obtain any satisfactory information respecting Pierre; and the Prior, who had his secret reasons for placing no reliance on the intelligence

given by the Consul about the young Shepherd, at length dismissed him to his official employments with a severe reprimand, and an intimation, not very obscurely hinted, that another offence would be followed by its well-merited punishment.

Vidal returned home, meditating evil against all who might fall into his power. Yet the venom would have perhaps lain for some time concealed, if his passions had not been irritated by the loquacity of Mademoiselle Coste, who with exaggerated reports and artful insinuations, was perpetually sounding in his ears the opinions formed, and the discourses held respecting him: but it was mortified love which, above all other feelings, disturbed his rest; and though this quick-sighted damsel could not be ignorant that her merit must be slighted in proportion as

his imagination was inflamed with the thoughts of Rose la Porte, the spirit of communication was too strong within her to be overcome, and the approaching nuptials of Rose and Isidore, sanctioned by Madame Durand, and facilitated by her liberality, was the theme with which her "Dear Cousin" was without fail entertained whenever chance brought him in contact with that sharp instrument of torture—a female gossip's tongue.

"I wonder what is the matter with our Consul," said the Postmistress one morning, as she was standing with a party of her acquaintance at the Fourniere's, where they waited the baking of their bread; "he looks of late as if some demon had possessed him."

"Matter enough," said the Fourniere, "for a man like him to be scouted by a girl who ought to think it an honour that

he will but look at her—and for what, too? for a lad who is as proud as he is poor; and that's saying little enough."

"One comfort he has," exclaimed a stout Brigadiere, brandishing a pair of wooden beetlers, with which she just returned from the fountain; "if he have but little, he has it honestly, which is more than every one can say."

"All that is very fine," said the Postmistress; "but honesty is sometimes more in a man's way than poverty; for he may escape from the one, but if he attempts to get rid of the other, the remembrance of it is apt to haunt him ever after. For my part, I can't think what the Consul, with his eyes always in his neighbour's purse, has to do with love, though I wish he thought of nothing else, and would leave the price of meat to those who know more about it."

"And pray, friends," said the Fourniere, "what made you all so wise in the matter? And why do you think it's that crosses him?"

"If he's not been refused," said the Postmistress, "as I am assured he has been, do you think he'd allow Isidore to be always with Rose? Does he want a clerk to make love for him as well as to make out warrants!"

"Get you a pair of spectacles, for you want them," cried the Fourniere; "don't you see that's only till all things are ready, and that there are many ways of getting rid of a man when the time arrives."

"Getting rid of him!" exclaimed all the hearers.

"I don't mean," said the Fourniere, "hanging or stabbing, either, but very cleverly putting him out of the way of being troublesome. Let the Consul alone

for clearing the field for action, when he once sets about it. You may believe me, for I am in the way of hearing a good deal, one way and another."

Whether the good woman intended to make them as wise as herself we know not, but her husband entering the bake-house from an inner room, prevented all further discussion, declaring with an oath that he had a deference for all in authority, and never in his house suffered any thing to be said against those who ought to be respected. The women all laughed, for he was more than suspected of being himself under the most despotic of all governments; and the laugh turned the subject of discourse.

The vague hints of the Fourniere she had forced from her complaisant spouse, who being often employed as a petty officer of justice, might be said to possess official

intelligence. It is certain, that the Consul had formed a plan for forcing Isidore into the military career, as the best means of removing him from the village and from Rose; and though he wanted some months of the age prescribed by law, and as the only son of his mother, and she a widow, was exempted from service, yet as a Protestant the register of his birth might not be considered as legal, and he was not a man to be stopped in his career for the sake of a few difficulties. He was, however, convinced that his plan would be incomplete so long as Rose, though deprived of a lover, had the presence of a father to strengthen her in her repugnance to his wishes; and not long after his return from the Priory, fortune seemed, in this point also, to crown his evil purposes with every prospect of success.

The zeal of Monsieur la Porte, notwithstanding the lessons he had learned in adversity, was not always checked by prudence; and, in the warmth of extemporary preaching, some expressions occasionally escaped him which might be compared to the frostwork on windows, or the momentary forms seen in the fire, that present such different appearances to the imaginations of different beholders. On one occasion, these had been repeated to the Consul by two of his creatures; and though their memory so far failed them, that they were about proceeding to blows in his presence to determine which had reported with most correctness, yet their deposition, arranged so as to form a respectable subject of accusation, had been some time since conveyed to the Intendant of the Province, whom Vidal had always found extremely ready to re-

ceive the trash he could procure for him. The Intendant was at that moment too much engaged to pay it the requisite attention: he had been recalled from a government that was ill-suited to a man of irritable feelings and short-sighted policy; yet willing to comfort Vidal in the prospect of his departure, his last act was signing an order for the arrest of Monsieur la Porte, *soi-disant* minister of the gospel at Vallerargues, and for his immediate transmission to Paris for examination, unless he could produce an authenticated copy of the offensive sermon, and respectable witnesses to bear testimony to its being such. At a time when the mere profession of the protestant faith rendered a man's honour and integrity dubious, the latter stipulation was difficult, and the former was impossible, as the eloquence that flowed from his

heart was unfortunately seldom committed to paper. The circumstance, indeed, had passed from the memories of all but the tenacious Consul, who almost forgot his late vexations in the joy with which he broke the seals of the Intendant's packet and read the long-delayed order. So great was his delight, that he could scarcely spare a few lamentations for the departure of the great man, whose spirit was so much in unison with his; and though it was late for visits of ceremony, he would not defer till the following morning communicating the intelligence to those principally concerned in it. After again and again satisfying himself that no form of law was wanting, the Consul, followed by two of his Sbirri, stole along the deserted streets to the house of Monsieur la Porte, where his presence was at best never welcome.

Rose, who had returned home for a few days previous to her departure with Madame Durand for the Mountains, still held her guitar in her hand, to which she had been singing some simple Swiss romances, early favourites of her father's, and as the Consul entered, she hastened with some confusion to put the instrument out of sight, lest he should presume to ask her to touch it for him; the Pastor started from the couch, on which he was reposing after the fatigues of the day, that he might not be forced to invite his visiter to a seat; and his wife, who was dozing in an arm-chair, bustled out of the room to finish her nap more commodiously in the kitchen. With all his effrontery, after the first bows and ceremonials were over, the Consul found it difficult to begin a conversation, and a glance at himself in a looking-glass—his

wig awry, his neckcloth besmeared with snuff, and his every-day attire rather the worse for wear, did not embolden him in the presence of the lady of his affections. Indeed he seemed to have so completely forgotten the purport of his coming, that La Porte was at length compelled, by a civil question, to attempt discovering whether he had not by chance mistaken the house he intended to enter.

"No, no, my good Sir," said the Consul, with a look of affected sorrow; "I wish I could say that I had, but I seldom make mistakes in business, that would not do for me; and my instructions, Monsieur la Porte, are, I am sorry to say, so clear, so circumstantial, so authoritative, that notwithstanding my wish to oblige you, I cannot saddle the affair upon another."

"What affair?" said La Porte, much astonished; "pray explain yourself."

"I intend it, Sir, in a few words," replied the Consul; "it is an awkward business, and I would fain hush the matter up; but when once a report gets to the higher powers, it would be as easy to tie the winds in their bags again, which you know even the wise Ulysses could not do, as to silence it."

"Really," said La Porte, "I must confess myself at a loss to understand your allusions, however classical they may be. Rose, my love, you had better go to your mother."

"No occasion Sir," said the Consul, "what all the world must so soon know, need not I presume be kept secret;" then, with many hems and haws, he drew the paper from his pocket, and with a low bow, presenting it to La Porte, stood rubbing his hands while he perused it. La Porte for some time appeared to con-

sider it attentively, and smiled as he proceeded.

The Consul, who was prepared for any thing rather than this composure, interrupted him by saying, "Perhaps, Sir, as you are not used to these kind of documents, there may be something in the phraseology that you do not quite understand?"

"Pardon me, Monsieur Vidal," said La Porte, "the characters and wording are clear, but there is something in the whole composition that I own puzzles me."

"Why," replied the Consul, putting on his spectacles as he spoke, "does it not plainly accuse you, Sir,—forgive the liberty I take—of using your influence over the minds of the people to seduce them from their allegiance; does it not further state, that for this offence you are forthwith to be taken to Paris for trial?"

"To Paris!" exclaimed Rose, who had hitherto given little attention to what was passing—"my father to be tried!"

"Yes, my love," said La Porte, "so this paper states; but all is not done in this world that is threatened."

"What do you mean to insinuate, Sir?" exclaimed the Consul, a little off his guard; "do you think I am the bearer of a gasconade which I am afraid of executing? the summons is a good one, as you will find to your cost, and the witnesses such as I would take with me into any court of justice."

"Very possibly," said La Porte, coolly; "but every one may not entertain the same opinion of them, and perhaps I may be able to produce others equally creditable."

"Granting that you do," replied the Consul, "who is there do you think, Mon-

sieur le Pasteur, to pay for their carrying their credibility so far? I don't suppose you expect them to be such fools as to wear out their shoes in your service without fee or reward?"

"I expect nothing of the kind," said La Porte, "neither do I expect that a man is to be forced upon such a journey every time his words are misrepresented, or misunderstood."

"You had better mind what you are about," said Vidal, his assumed moderation deserting him fast, "such expressions only serve to provoke me; I am not to be insulted with impunity:" and turning to Rose, who, with a supplicating look, was endeavouring to persuade her father to be cautious, he added, "You see, Mademoiselle, a man's best intentions are often thwarted by the airs of those he wishes to serve: I must say, I came here

with a desire to accommodate matters as far as duty would permit: I thought a little explanation, a few concessions, might have arranged all; there is nothing, Mademoiselle, I would not do for your sake, but you hear what hints are thrown out. I am compelled to be inflexible, and I doubt, if after such a reception, you could wonder at my resisting even your solicitations."

"You may spare yourself the trouble of deciding," said Rose, rather contemptuously; "it is not likely, Sir, that I should put you to such a trial."

"No, my child," said La Porte, "if I must go, I will not hesitate, but no unworthy means shall be employed by my family."

"If," repeated the Consul—"do you then intend, Sir, to doubt or resist the authority by which I act? I have the

means of enforcing it, that I should be loath to make use of, but there is no knowing to what you may compel me."

"In obeying this order, Monsieur Vidal," said La Porte, "it is not your authority I respect, for I regard you simply in the light of an informer, and I have no doubt of soon convincing those you may have misled, that my intention at least was good. You will, at any rate, have procured me an opportunity of pointing out to those in power, the danger of delegating it to persons who are so ready to make a man an offender for a word. My dear child, do not look so much alarmed, have we not a just and equitable sovereign? Believe me, we shall soon meet again, and I shall have learnt a lesson of caution, which is always so necessary."

"It's easy talking so in your own

house," said Vidal, with a malicious look, that bore as much resemblance to a smile, as does the distortion of face occasioned by a sour crab; "but further north, opinions may chance to be different, and I have known a smaller offence be rewarded with a few months insight into the economy of the Galleys."

Rose, as he uttered the word, screamed with terror, and throwing herself into her father's arms, seemed as if she would thus secure his safety. Alarmed by her voice, Madame la Porte ran into the room. She always augured ill from Vidal's presence, and the looks of the party when she entered, were not calculated to dissipate her fears.

"What is the matter," she exclaimed, in great agitation, "is my child ill?—my husband! Monsieur Vidal, you have brought us no bad news, I trust?"

"If I have, Madam," he answered sharply, "I am certainly not responsible for it; though it seems that M. le Pasteur, finding he cannot quarrel with my errand, thinks fit to do so with the messenger, and to vent his rage on me."

"His rage! you mistake, surely, Monsieur Vidal," said Madame la Porte; who, if left to her own judgment, would have considered her husband as by far the calmest of the two. "But it does not signify talking, I must know what all this means, and not have the whole neighbourhood alarmed before I am told the reason why."

La Porte briefly explained the affair; and on hearing it, the good lady not only exceeded poor Rose in her grief and apprehensions, but gave way to such a torrent of invectives against the man of law, that it was with difficulty her husband

could check them. The suddenness of the summons was what particularly struck Madame la Porte; to be forced on such a journey at the beginning of the night, without time for preparation, was to her methodical mind and regular habits, such a trial as was sufficient for a time to absorb every faculty; and even her indignation was occasionally mixed with reflections on the little that could be done for him at so short a notice, and the innumerable inconveniences he would experience in travelling alone.

"No, my dear mother," said Rose, as she made this last remark, "it shall never be said that my father is dragged where his child refuses to accompany him."

"You, my love!" said La Porte, pressing her still more closely to his bosom; "you! impossible! you cannot think I shall allow of such a sacrifice."

"Nothing is impossible, dearest father," replied Rose, "to those who know the happiness of being with you; nothing is impossible, but that the people who tear you from your home, should separate you from your daughter!—hard-hearted as they are, they cannot refuse my entreaties, and at least I shall have the consolation of knowing the worst, and of cheering your sufferings. Do not, dear Sir, be more cruel than our enemies—they will not forbid my going; Monsieur Vidal, I am sure you can answer for them!"

"I cannot promise much, Mademoiselle Rose," said Vidal, with a sneer; "but I think it hardly probable you will try them; few young ladies nowadays leave a favoured and handsome young lover for the sake of a greyheaded father."

Rose turned to him with a look of more

indignation than it seemed possible for her mild countenance to assume. "It was not your opinion of the continuance of my wish that you were required to give, Sir; when virtuous feelings are concerned, Monsieur Vidal is the last person whose judgment I should have recourse to."

The Consul was silent; and while both parents, with anxious solicitude, were endeavouring to dissuade Rose from her intention, he reflected with some vexation how inconsiderately he had been led from the line of conduct he had purposed pursuing. Habit had been too strong for him, and he found it difficult to throw off the manners suited to his disposition. He perceived that he had irritated Rose at a moment when he most wished to conciliate her, and that he had neglected in the joy of his heart, the opportunity of

conferring a favour. As he walked up and down the room, biting his nails, and casting a side glance at the family group, whose happiness in their mutual affection it was not in his power to disturb, he could not refrain from confessing that the oppressed were enviable, even to the oppressor, and that one moment of such feelings was worth more than the whole enjoyment of his life. After much deliberation, he at length determined on repairing, if possible, what was past; and concealing his anger with a dexterity all men do not possess, he went up to Monsieur la Porte, and with a look which he endeavoured to render conciliatory, attempted some sort of apology for the hasty expressions into which he had been betrayed.

"You think me your enemy, Monsieur le Pasteur," he continued; "but you are

mistaken; believe me, and not those prating go-betweens, who never rest till they have set worthy people by the ears. You are mistaken, too, if you think I brought that paper in order to enforce it: to be sure, appearances were rather against me; but you were so hasty, my good Sir,—we were both so hasty,—the finest dispositions always are; if they had not a little fire to quicken them up they'd grow musty and mouldy, like your best-natured people in the world, for whom nobody cares whether they're dead or alive. Now to be free with you, for you know I love frankness, I own I did say to the Intendant in a moment of pique, that you made use of those expressions: it was some months ago, and you see when I had forgotten the affair, what use he has made of it. Now what I wish to hint is simply this, that as I am the person who spoke against

you, I can as easily speak for you, and unsay in a moment what I then told his lordship. You comprehend, Monsieur le Pasteur?"

"Not entirely," said La Porte; "if what you declared was the truth, it is not in the power of man to alter it."

"Pho!" said the Consul, "that is a dry old maxim, taken out of some of the fathers, I suppose, books quite out of fashion, never looked into now,—it was found too inconvenient to reconcile them with the principles by which the world ought to be governed, so they are laid aside, except by a few quacks in divinity; but allowing Truth cannot be altered in her nature, she is, I have heard, naked, and it is a charity to clothe her, which may reasonably be done according to our own fancy. This I am quite ready to do —I will lay all to the exaggeration of my

zeal, the incorrectness of my memory, or any thing you please, and you shall, instead of being separated from your home and family, be secured in the possession of future tranquillity. I must add, a handsomer offer could not be made, and that you are a fool, with reverence be it spoken, if you do not embrace it."

La Porte was about to speak, but Vidal checking him, continued—" Softly, Sir; every case has two sides, and it is fair you should hear both. You cannot but perceive, that by acting in this manner, I put myself in your power; and if after fifteen a man commits such a folly, he deserves to be called an ass for his pains. I can see but one remedy for this difficulty:—you have a daughter, Monsieur le Pasteur; I am not a man of compliments, as you may suppose, having never during my whole life, studied any thing but what

was needful; give her to me, let her be the bond of union between us, and you not only free yourself from the present danger, but make me your friend for life. Think, Mademoiselle Rose, what a happiness for you, in addition to a good marriage, to be the means of saving your father from ruin, and your mother perhaps from a broken heart."

Poor Rose! it may easily be imagined what were her feelings at this proposition. She turned deadly pale, but afraid of trusting her voice to speak, only looked at her father with a distress no parent could have resisted. Madame la Porte, who had begun to soften as the Consul, with his pretensions to blunt frankness, proceeded in his speech, lifted up her hands and eyes with astonishment; and La Porte, still holding his child to his bosom, replied indignantly—" This trea-

sure was confided, Monsieur Vidal, by Heaven, to my care, that I might protect and preserve it from harm, not that I should yield it to misery and infamy, in order to shield myself from difficulty. This is the only answer I can make to such a proposal: you may now proceed to perform your duty."

"Infamy!" exclaimed the Consul, almost choked with rage; "infamy, to be my wife! misery, to be the object of my choice! Not even your ignorance of what is due to your superiors, Sir, can excuse such an unheard-of insult: but bitterly shall you rue the day, you dared to use such language. The time may not be far distant, that in the helplessness and despair to which you seem determined to reduce yourself, you may receive back this dainty fair one whom you are now so proud of; when I shall have cast her

off with deserved contempt, you will then know what infamy is, and may vainly crouch in the dust, to implore me to raise her to an honour which you now so madly spurn from you."

"And would spurn for ever," cried La Porte, "could my child live to be the abject wretch your foul revenge would make her. Leave the room, this moment, insulting villain! I am not your prisoner, and if I were, I would defend my daughter to my last gasp, from the pollution of your hateful presence."

He was eagerly advancing towards the Consul, while Rose and Madame la Porte, clinging round with wild apprehension, endeavoured to impede his steps; but Vidal, not willing to trust to the strength of his single arm, sprang to the door, and began to call loudly for the assistance of the "Archers," whom he had left at the

entrance. In his eagerness to make them hear, he did not perceive that several persons had gathered to the spot, attracted by the sight of these two sentries; and no sooner did they catch his voice, than they rushed tumultuously into the parlour, to prevent any violence being offered to the Pastor. Amongst the foremost, was young Isidore; no sooner had he perceived the situation of the family, than seizing the Consul by the arm, he would have fairly ejected him from the premises, but for the remonstrance of La Porte, who dreaded the effect of further outrage. A confusion of tongues ensued, that for a time set all explanation at defiance; one party calling for vengeance; another for fair play, and the most sensible endeavouring to moderate the vehemence of both. At length the neighbours were with some difficulty persuaded to re-

tire to the kitchen, carrying the "Archers" along with them, and Isidore, keeping a wary eye on the Consul, permitted him to enjoy the freedom of the room, whilst he eagerly inquired the occasion of this scene of alarm.

La Porte, who was now recovered from the momentary heat to which such language had roused him, and already regretted his vehemence, softened every particular as much as possible, though sufficient was told to awaken his hearer's indignation. Isidore had been present at the sermon in question. His retentive memory corrected some errors in the statement, and gave a different turn to the whole. But even if Vidal were before inclined to compromise what had passed in the few last minutes, his antipathy to him who now undertook the office of mediator, was sufficient to render him

deaf to all accommodation. Finding, therefore, that the more he argued, the more diabolical the Consul grew. Isidore, as the only service he could render his kind friend, proposed accompanying him to Paris, where his testimony might be of more avail. Madame la Porte was loud in her encouragements and her praise of such a disinterested act of kindness. Rose, who could not but feel his assistance would be more effectual than hers, ventured, however, to remind him of the anxiety of his mother.

"You will comfort her," said Isidore, in a low voice, "and when it is for you, Rose, how can she object!"

La Porte was more determined in his refusal, and even while he combated a resolution that would have been so agreeable to him, his arguments were as strong and convincing as if prompted by incli-

nation. In the warmth of this friendly contest, each only sought the other's benefit.

"Ah! my children," at length exclaimed La Porte, in joining Isidore's hand with that of Rose, "let us never shrink from moments of trial, since they are often the sweetest of our lives; we know not how rich affection is, till we are forced by what appears a hard necessity, to call upon it for sacrifices which it would otherwise never have the happiness of making. Let us not envy those, who, possessing only this world's wealth, are poor indeed; we have a treasure more precious than that of Peru, and you will, I trust, find, that should all else fail us, this will remain."

Isidore pressed the hand thus given to him to his lips, with a rapture that made him for a time forget the painful circum-

stances that had drawn him there, but Rose heeded not his emotion. At such a moment her heart had no room for any other passion. She felt only as a daughter, about to lose her father, perhaps for ever; and if another thought for an instant crossed her mind, it was simply, how much he was exalted in her estimation, whom that father had called his child.

The Consul, in the mean time, sickened at the scene, and put an end to the debate, by declaring it was not in his instructions, that the Pastor should be accompanied by his friends.

"It was not specified in your instructions, I suppose, Sir," cried the undaunted Isidore, "to allow him to eat or sleep, yet I do not imagine you intend to put in a preventive. Besides, you cannot forbid my choosing another mode of reaching Paris, perhaps as convenient as that which

you will provide. I am, I hope, still free to go where I please?"

"This boasted freedom may not last long," muttered Vidal. "I have many a long score to clear with you, young man; and these are debts I never forget to pay."

Isidore turned from him without a reply. It was, however, necessary to come to some decision. The alarm had spread, and crowds of the Protestant population, which far exceeded the Roman Catholics in the commune—some even of the less fanatic of the latter were assembling around the house. Vidal was impatient to depart; he felt his danger to be near, his means of defence distant, and trembled lest his authority should not prove sufficient to carry his design into immediate effect, since a delay might render it entirely abortive, by allowing time for a reference to those whose opinion might

not agree with his. Nor was his anxiety diminished, on venturing his head out of window, by the appearance of the numbers who had collected, and the hum of indignant voices that was plainly to be heard. In this dilemma he was forced to compromise with the Pastor, by offering to allow him to remain that night at his own house, on his promise of setting out without resistance, the following morning. "But what assurance will you give me?" he added.

"My honour," said La Porte.

"Your honour, indeed!" replied the Consul; "it's a very precious pledge I doubt not, and yet I should not be surprised at your going off some other way, and leaving it in my custody till your return."

"It might supply the loss of yours meanwhile, Monsieur le Consul," said

Isidore; "but if you prefer a substitute, I am ready to accompany you home for this night, and I rather think, that notwithstanding your scarf, you will find me a useful protector on the way."

After some hesitation this was agreed upon; La Porte undertook to disperse the kindhearted people with assurances of his safety, and they returned quietly home, though not without some threats against those who should hurt a hair of his head. He had still, however, the more difficult task of engaging his wife and child to retire without apprehension. All his assurances could not entirely reassure the mind of Rose; she still clung to him; still bathed his cheeks with her tears, calling him by every epithet that affection could dictate; still implored him not to leave her, and thus wrung his heart, when it required every nerve to be strong

against the painful trial of the morrow. Her mother was obliged, almost by force, to unclasp her hands from his neck, while La Porte, sobbing like a child, joined in supplicating her to leave him, if she would not break his heart. Some composing drops at length threw her into a restless, feverish sleep, and kissing her burning forehead, and leaving his wife to watch by her bedside, he withdrew, not to rest, but to prevent the recurrence of such a heart-rending scene. The remainder of the night was passed in arranging his papers, writing letters full of tender advice to Madame la Porte and Rose, and an earnest request to Madame Durand, to supply his place in defending the latter from every danger. When all was concluded, he knelt down, and with the faith of a Christian, though the feelings of a husband and father, recommended those

he so dearly loved to the protection of that Almighty Being, who has promised to watch over the widow and the orphan; then taking a small bundle of linen and his pocket-bible, with the staff in his hand which had formerly supported his father's steps, he gently opened the street-door, and with only one glance, one sigh towards the window from whence streamed the rays of the watch-light on the pavement, proceeded to the Consul's house. Vidal, too much agitated for sleep, had not yet retired to rest, and most gladly acceded to La Porte's desire of immediately setting out. Isidore was soon summoned, and in vain repeated his request of being permitted to accompany him; La Porte, after recommending earnestly to him the caution and forbearance so necessary in his circumstances, and bidding him hope that they should share

together far happier days, began his journey, attended by a proper escort, to Nismes; and when the first streak of light announced the approach of day, he sighed to think he was already so far from Vallerargues.

CHAPTER II.

LES BERGERS.

Sur ces montagnes lointaines
Vos troupeaux s'embelliront;
Mais vos Bergers souffriront;
Et, pour soulager leurs peines,
Ils n'auront dans ce sejour
Ni le plaisir, ni l'amour.

FLORIAN.

IT was late on the following morning before Isidore ventured to repair to Madame Durand's, in order to inform her of the melancholy event that had befallen her friends, and to give her the letter which Monsieur la Porte had left with him for that purpose. She scarcely allowed herself time to read it, but hastened to the house of mourning, where, indeed,

her presence was much needed. Fatigue and anxiety had, towards morning, thrown Madame la Porte into a deep sleep, from which on awaking, her first thought was to hasten to her husband. Alas! his room was empty; the book he had been reading the preceding evening still lay open, and beside it was the letter that confirmed all her apprehensions. With that want of self-command, which is too often excused by warmth of feeling, and forgetful of the state of her daughter, she made the house re-echo to her cries, and rushing up stairs, flung herself in violent hysterics on the bed, where Rose was just recovering to a confused recollection of the transactions of the preceding evening. The frightened maid-servant in vain endeavoured to assist her; some kind neighbours were necessarily called in, and the house presented a scene of tumult, dis-

tracting to those who think quiet is requisite for the endurance of sorrow.

As soon as Madame Durand appeared, Rose sprung from the bed, and throwing herself on the ground before her, clasped her knees with heart-rending entreaties, supplicating her to restore her father, or procure her the means of following him.

"My dear child," said Madame Durand, gently raising her, and pressing the agitated girl to her bosom, "ask me not what is impossible;—I feel for all you suffer;—but remember, that He who has deprived you of a parent, can alone supply his place, and it is to Him you must address yourself."

"Ah, Madam," cried the sobbing Rose, "if you did but know what a father he is."

"I do know, my love," replied Madame Durand, "all your heart must undergo,

but in this life all happiness is uncertain in its tenure, and we must not ungratefully forget the enjoyment of past blessings when they are taken from us; we were not made to be enslaved by sorrow, but to conquer it. While I pity you, I am not without hope—the wicked are not invincible, as we sometimes fancy when we feel the effects of their malignity: if it lies in my power to serve you, you may depend on my using every exertion that affection can suggest."

We are so prone to seize the slightest comfort, that the idea of something being done was the first that aroused Rose from her despair. There is no sympathy so delightful as that which promises assistance. She looked at Madame Durand with a gratitude words were unable to express, and finding her but imperfectly informed of what had taken place, faith-

fully narrated the whole transaction. Madame Durand was much struck with her narrative; and although Rose, wholly occupied by her father, passed slightly over the part relating to herself, it appeared to her highly improbable that Vidal, for so trifling an accusation, could expect in any tribunal that La Porte would be more than reprimanded. His wish was evidently to secure his immediate absence, and his inducement was easily found in the lovely young creature before her. She trembled to think to what lengths his villany might proceed, and determined, without needlessly alarming Rose, strictly to fulfil the charge confided to her. Her first care was to remove her entirely under her own roof, a proceeding to which Madame la Porte could with difficulty be reconciled, and to which she only consented by the offer of an intimate

friend in the neighbourhood to assist her in supporting the tedium of time.

As much business, to which she had been always unaccustomed, devolved on her, Madame Durand promised to defer her departure to the Mountains for some time, guarding against any scheme Vidal might put in practice by never suffering Rose out of her sight. She was also desirous of interesting a friend of hers in Paris in favour of Monsieur la Porte, and by his means to procure for him the protection of the Count de St. Romain, who had lately been appointed Intendant of the Province, and was expected before long to enter upon his office. The answer to the letter she wrote for this purpose, gave the whole party all the satisfaction they could receive, short of the return of La Porte. It was accompanied by a few lines from himself, announcing his safe

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arrival, and the permission he had obtained, through the interference of Madame Durand's friend, to reside in a private lodging until his examination commenced. Cheered by this intelligence, Rose began again to smile, and Madame la Porte rejoiced to find her own appetite and rest returning.

It was at length determined, that Madame Durand should leave Vallerargues in the end of May, when the departure of the flocks for the summer, to the pastures on the high lands, would require Isidore's absence; and she judged it expedient that he should fix them in their new habitation before he proceeded to his rural cares. Many tears were shed by Madame la Porte at parting with her daughter, but her grief was moderated by reflecting on the still greater loss she had lately sustained.

Poor Madeleine seemed to look forward with more than her usual forebodings to her son's annual absence, proud as she certainly was of the notice taken of him by the lady. She was never satisfied with the preparations for his comfort in the wild regions he was about to visit, and twenty times in the day she would stop from her work to throw her arms round his neck, and gaze at him with doating fondness, as if to impress more firmly on her recollection the image of what she was so soon to lose. "Poor boy!" she would say, "you may travel far, but the mother's heart can nowhere be found except at home; and may be, though you are grown so fine a man, you'll miss me and think of me, when all is strange about you."

"That you need not doubt, my dearest mother," he replied; "there is indeed no

kindness like yours; but you should not be so much cast down, you know I shall be back in a few months."

"I know what I see," said the good woman, shaking her head: "I know when you are with me, it seems as if the world, and all things in it, smiled upon me; and when you're away, they may smile or not, I should never feel the difference. And that Germany, too, if they think to send you there, they may provide a place for me too, for I never will let you go so far—that if you were dying even, I could not come to you."

Isidore smiled as he contemplated the figure so dear to his eyes, but which would draw so much ridicule among strangers; and, by every mark of affection and assurance in his power, endeavoured to turn her attention to more pleasing prospects. Madeleine found it difficult to look far into

futurity, and though she returned to her employments, the tears kept falling fast down her cheeks.

At an appointed day, the flocks, which were destined to perform their annual emigration in company, assembled at a small distance from the village, where a large open space allowed room for their being united. It was no longer the age of Estelle, at least, it was no longer the age of romance, and every occurrence in this working-day world wears a homely appearance, when contrasted with the poet's vision. Yet the ancient customs were in some measure preserved, and the half stifled emotions of the young men about to part for a season from their fair mistresses, and the more openly expressed grief of these forsaken maidens, were still to be met with. There was an endeavour, also, to give the appearance

of a fête to the scene. The flocks were marked with the ciphers of their respective masters ; the shepherd-boys and their favourite lambs were decked with wreaths of flowers and gaily coloured ribbands ; the rustic hautboy played its well known farewell, and the echoes still repeated the legendary chorus, with which the two parties bade each other a sad farewell, till the lengthening distance prevented the faint notes from reaching the ear. Then, and not till then, the disconsolate fair ones returned to the village, which now appeared so desert in their eyes, and prepared to linger away the summer months in expectation of the return of those they loved.

In the cool of the same evening, Madame Durand left her temporary abode, mounted, as well as Rose, on sure-footed mules, as no wheel-carriage could possibly pass

along the road she intended to pursue. Isidore escorted them on foot, and an honest thick-headed peasant also accompanied them, to serve as a protector, when his attention to the care of his flock should oblige him to absent himself. The feeling of removal is always painful, except to some few restless spirits, who taste no pleasure but in novelty, and each of the party had peculiar subjects for silence and thoughtfulness.

The approaching night, therefore, compelled them to seek a shelter before they had interchanged many words, and early the next morning they again resumed their way, though with rather more sociability, as the act of travelling became more familiar, and the increasing beauty or sublimity of the scenery called for their admiration. Isidore had often visited these more retired parts of the country,

and as he was well acquainted with what was calculated to give his companions pleasure, he contrived to lead them into many a hidden recess, and to many an unexpected point which did not exactly lay on their route, but which amply repaid them for the trouble of seeking it. By degrees, Rose began to find that Vallerargues, from which she had set out, filled with painful regret, was not the only spot on earth where she could be happy, if once her father were restored to her, and and Madame Durand was soothed into a feeling of delight, which is perhaps peculiar to that delicious climate, and which is so independent of all outward circumstances, that to a warm imagination it seems to express what may be the happiness of those etherial beings, with which poetic superstition has peopled the sunny air.

They entered, before long, upon the range of the Lower Cevennes, and wandered through scenes so silent, that it appeared as if the foot of man had never polluted the ground, inhaling at the same time such a perpetual succession of sweet odours as almost intoxicated the senses; reposing at noon, under the thick shade of the beech, the chestnut, the lime, the lotus-tree, and the evergreen oak, and fanned by the fairy wings of thousands of fluttering butterflies, that glanced their rainbow colours in the sun. To complete the enchantment, the nightingale roused them from sleep in the morning, and lulled them to repose at night, and his song, though sweeter far than all, did not silence the other choristers, that made the woods resound with their notes.

After a journey of some days, they reached the village of St. Florent, and

Madame Durand determined on taking up her abode there, as the inhabitants appeared obliging and honest; and its vicinity to St. Jean du Gardonneuque, celebrated for its cleanliness, and the pureness of the streams which flow near it, rendered it in many respects desirable. It was not long before they were as commodiously situated as circumstances could admit, in a small house, distant about a quarter of a league from the village, and occupied by a peasant and his family, whose chief subsistence was derived from an immense quantity of silk-worms, that at this period particularly required their attention, and were soon to yield a produce which forms the riches of the Lower Cevennes, whence the manufactories of great part of France are supplied. The mulberry-trees stript of their leaves for their nourishment, offered the strange and

dreary appearance of winter, in the midst of the freshness and gaiety of spring; but the country round presented so many other beauties, that their loss was the less regarded. The salubrity of the air seemed to invigorate Madame Durand's health, and some letters, no less marked by resignation than affection, which she received from her brother, gave for a time an additional animation to her looks. Her first care was to make every possible inquiry respecting Monsieur Brunel, whose name was well known, but of whom no late particulars could be obtained; she therefore resolved on engaging Isidore to seek him out, during the further progress he was about to make. The place appointed for his flock, was at a considerable distance, and Madame Durand indulged a hope that his activity would successfully second her own endeavours.

The time fixed for his departure at length arrived; it was not the prospect of the fatigues attending a shepherd's life, that rendered him more than usually silent, on the last evening he was to spend with Madame Durand and Rose. Reason told him, that a few weeks would complete his duties, and ensure a happy return,—but Reason cannot always maintain her authority; the usurper Imagination overturns her power, and weakens the mind, that she may the more easily rule over it. In spite of all arguments to the contrary, Isidore felt as if this wished-for return would never take place; it is true, there seemed no immediate cause of fear. Vidal was far distant, and, contrary to their apprehensions, appeared sullenly to acquiesce in his disappointment; but a lover's fancy, that adorns sober reality with such bright hues, often gives to his

airy creations the force of reality, and contrives to be as wretched from apprehension, as others can be from certainty. Rose watched the sadness of his looks, and it is so easy to catch the infection from those we love, that her own were soon as melancholy. Her spirits had already received the first shock in the absence of her father, and this break in the even tenor of her peaceful life, prepared her to think with the impatience of those unaccustomed to the yoke, that in this world *every* expectation must be blasted. Yet, though disposed to cavil with every reason urged for his departure, a feeling of timidity kept her silent, and even when she most bitterly lamented its necessity, she would not have exchanged her present suffering for years of careless cold indifference.

Since Monsieur la Porte's departure,

their mutual regard had rapidly increased. Each remembered the evening when their hands had been united by a father; and the vague impression, long cherished, though unacknowledged, was not only confirmed but rendered sacred by his approval. Rose already looked upon Isidore as her friend and protector through life, and her being deprived of a parent's care heightened the fervor of his attachment. He had with all the imprudence of youth earnestly requested Madame Durand to allow of their immediate union, and by that means ensure to Rose a defender against every danger; but her prudence was an insurmountable barrier to this proposal, and even while Isidore complained of her firmness, he could not but admit the cogency of many of her reasons. Severe as the parting was, neither was destitute of that strength which makes

every sacrifice possible. Some consider that at least the gay moments of life are to be enjoyed in liberty, without the mind recurring to that Being who, though we may forget him, never forgets us. If they *can* find pleasure in the idea, let them enjoy it; but surely none will deny that the thought of His presence is the only consolation in sorrow,—that we should sink under the slightest weight did he not support us,—and that every separation would be a foretaste of the dark and final hour, did we not feel that in his love we are still united to those from whom seas and desert lands may divide us.

We cannot easily decide, whether in the pains of absence, man or woman shares most, since both conceal the wound long before it is healed. Man to escape the ridicule which would be sacrilege to his feelings, and to appear to give undi-

vided attention to the more important employments he must engage in; woman, not only from the fear of the world's derision, but to ensure that self-approbation which is so essential to her peace.

It was rare that a half-suppressed sigh interrupted the cheerful assiduity with which Rose the next day began again to devote herself to the comfort of Madame Durand; yet was this calmness far from proving that her thoughts did not perpetually follow Isidore on his way; and it was by frequent fits of musing, he showed his mind was far from being intent upon the various objects of his journey. In order to take advantage of the time most agreeable for travelling in that warm season, he had set out from St. Florent two hours before sunrise, and when the heat of the day compelled him to seek some shelter and repose, found himself near the

Hermitage where Vidal had stopped on his way home. The sound of several loud voices made him doubt whether it was a favourable moment for intrusion; however, conjecturing it might be some peasants assembled to consult the Hermit, he walked on, and in turning a projection of the rock, perceived, to his great surprise, seated with the holy man, Father Bernardine, no unseemly guest at such a board, and two others, whose appearance was less in character. The elder was a man apparently about fifty, as a few white hairs intermingled themselves with his wiry black locks. His countenance presented the remains of manly beauty, but it was weather-beaten and inflamed from excess, and unpleasant from a peculiarly sly sarcastic look, which compelled the observer involuntarily to stand on his guard, while a bold daring manner and

speech awed the timid, and disgusted the fearless. The old faded uniform he wore seemed to have belonged to some German regiment, an enormous sabre was suspended from a rusty black leather belt, a pair of pistols hung from his ragged sash, and a fiercely cocked hat and green feather completed his military costume. The younger guest was in appearance far more interesting, and his eager looks, as he turned from one speaker to the other, showed how powerfully the subject of the conversation affected him. It was the shepherd Pierre, but as Isidore had never before met him, he was particularly struck with his open though rough countenance and strong athletic form. The whole party, thus seen by the imperfect light which entered the cell, formed such a group as might have harmonized with one of Salvator's wildest scenes. Isidore,

however, did not stop long to gaze; as his shadow, on his approaching, crossed the opening of the door-way, they started up with signs of some alarm. The soldier, with an oath, put his hand to his pistol, nor was it till the Pilgrim recognising Isidore, had taken him by the hand, and by his explanations dispelled their fears, that confidence was restored. By his friend's desire he seated himself, and wiping the dust from his brow looked with as much unconcern on the company as he could assume. The soldier returned his look with an impudent stare, his elbows resting on the stone table, and humming the air of a song more suited to the revels of a guard-room or watch-fire, than to the cell of an Anchorite. There was on the face of each the appearance of men suddenly interrupted in the midst of an important debate, of which they

feared some casual sounds might have fallen on the intruder's ear, and the difficulty of immediately turning to an indifferent subject kept all silent.

The Soldier at length began, by asking Isidore if he had not found the heat insupportable; and on being assured nothing else would have induced him to stop on his way, continued, "Ay, I should have thought so; even we were obliged to sit with open doors, which is not quite so desirable, except at a moment when most honest folk are either in their houses or at their work."

Isidore apologised for his intrusion.

"Never mind, lad," replied the other; "To speak for myself, I am used to sudden surprises of the enemy, and my saintly friend here must be prepared against every comer. Not that I take you for an enemy, or by my faith, care if

you are one, but it looks odd to drop in so unexpectedly, for I can't hear that any of us looked for you. Hey, my old boy!" tapping the Pilgrim on the shoulder, who shrunk disgusted from the rude salute; "perhaps you may know something of this stranger, and if you do, speak out, that I may give him a suitable greeting, for I have them ready of all sorts, for my friends and my foes."

"That youth," replied the Pilgrim, "needs not a greeting from you, Manuel; but the time may come, when you will sue for countenance from him."

"Countenance!" vociferated the Soldier. "Sabre de Bois! with such a one as mine, I tell you, greybeard, I sue to no one; but let us hear who is this miracle of authority who is to countenance, as you call it, Manuel Lafuyade!"

"Tell thee!" cried the Pilgrim; "tell it, you should say, to the town-crier."

"Do you doubt my honour?" fiercely demanded the other.

"I doubt your wisdom, friend; I doubt your discretion," said the Pilgrim; "I doubt your keeping a secret in your head that does not concern yourself, longer than you can a flask of brandy in your pocket."

"Thanks for the hint," cried Manuel, and with a knowing look, he drew forth a flagon of no small dimensions, which, tossing back his head, to prepare for a luxurious draught, he applied to his mouth with a fervour that showed the practice one of the favourite pastimes of his life. "Here's to you, my hearty one," he cried, nodding to Isidore, "I take my friend's word that you are not a spy, but you must prove yourself a friend, before you share this my prime favour with me." Such a draught would have incapacitated a weaker man for aught, but the drunkard's bliss which would naturally follow it, but

Manuel was an impenetrable drinker, and boasted himself sober upon the strength of a sound head. The Hermit observing the looks of unfeigned astonishment with which Isidore contemplated the scene, whispered the soldier, who replied with a loud oath, that he meant no harm, but was obliged to show what he was, lest in such a place, and with such company, he should be taken for a Calottin, a fasting, praying dragoon, or one fit even to engage in the service of our holy father the Pope, or like his namesake of old,

Un qu'avie gagna l'hallebarde
Per avédre servit quinze ans
Las méssas das penitens blancs.

" But," he continued, " to business; though, beforehand, I must advise this young gentleman to forget he has eyes, ears, or a tongue, or may be I shall be forced to make him do so with a touch of my broadsword."

"Audacious ruffian," cried the Pilgrim, "it is now thy turn to bluster; while we are in danger, we put up with the yelping of the cur that defends us, but when once it is over, he is silenced as he deserves."

"I must say," said Manuel, "I wish all yelping curs heard their fate as plainly as I do; I'd be hanged if they'd be such fools as to stand by you long. But I'm trusty you know, or you'd be afraid of provoking me."

"I afraid!" exclaimed the Pilgrim, rising with a vehemence ill suited to his age; "I afraid of one who has trembled at my very name, has shrunk under my glance, and would have licked the dust under my feet, had I commanded it."

"Softly," said Manuel, rather startled, "there's no use in talking of old times that are gone by, and are not likely to return; as you may easily see," he con-

tinued, baring his sinewy arm, firm as bronze, and stretching it by that of the Pilgrim, trembling from age and agitation; "I make no comparisons, but—"

"Be silent," exclaimed the Pilgrim; "the flesh may wax weak, but the mind by which such miscreants as you are ruled, is even strengthened by the blasts of years, and will never yield the sway to brutal force. But enough of this; you were born to obey, I to command; and learn also that to this youth you are to yield the same obedience as if Daniel Gui himself gave you orders." The soldier muttered a few more half intelligible oaths, and looked at Isidore from under his dark hanging brows with disdain; but the latter, not much pleased with his company, and wishing to escape altercation, followed the Pilgrim to the door, where he stood leaning against the rock, and

endeavouring to regain that composure which was so often disturbed by the too violent effects of his irritable feelings.

For some time Father Bernardine continued silent, and Isidore could with difficulty remove his eyes from the venerable figure before him, whose appearance presented such a strange mixture of the debility of age striving with the never-dying passions of youth, over which habitual caution was struggling for the mastery. The years of his life had fled in vain, each carrying away its share of joy, without leaving behind the peace and calm which so well replace it. The Pilgrim first broke silence by inquiring whence he came: Isidore, without hesitation, gave an account of his late proceedings, together with a relation of what had passed in Monsieur La Porte's family, and added his intention of now repairing to the care

of his flock, which so much called for his presence. "I knew all," replied the Pilgrim sternly, "but I wished to see if you dared own to me how totally you have disregarded my injunctions; how rashly you have rushed into that very danger I urged you to avoid."

"When I speak the truth," said Isidore, "I dare speak it to every one."

"And this, I doubt not," said the Pilgrim, "you think very grand, and that a few fine-sounding words will prevent my seeing that you are still boyish, weak, and simple, unworthy of my care and anxiety." Isidore coloured at this speech, which was peculiarly degrading to a young man verging on twenty-one. "Nay, be not testy; I speak only as your friend," continued the Pilgrim; "listen to me. The time draws near which I have so often predicted to you, and yet I see no change;

your ideas are still frivolous, and unworthy of what you are destined to. Other means must be tried: we bend by force the tree, whose wild luxuriant branches defy all gentler training, and since you go astray in your liberty, perhaps you may be corrected by control. Dare you achieve great things by small beginnings? dare you now submit your wayward will, that you may be taught how to govern that of others?"

"My good father," replied Isidore, "you have a power over me that few others possess, but use it discreetly; remember, I never will be led blindly even by you."

"And what then," cried the Pilgrim, raising his voice, "is the worth of a power which is thus limited and questioned? Vain subterfuges will not do for me; I have been used to deeds; and

think not, that if you be wanting, I cannot call upon others who will glory in doing my bidding. Fool that I am, to spend my wasting breath on one so dead to all that should animate him. Yet, if I cannot feel compassion for the weakness of others, who else can? When we last met, I counselled you to avoid fair forms and laughing eyes; have you heeded my counsel? Now, I command you to do so; I forbid you, without my leave, to interchange word or look with Rose la Porte; will you promise me?"

"I will not, I cannot," said Isidore, spurning at such an usurped authority.

"You will not, you cannot," tauntingly repeated the Pilgrim; "say rather you dare not!—say that you feel you have lost all power over yourself, and must henceforth sink into the soft repose of life, slave to a woman's capricious mood."

"I will be a slave to no one," exclaimed Isidore, indignantly.

"That's well," returned the Pilgrim; "act but as you speak, and you will not disgrace your—my care I should say. But youth easily deceives itself, and against such deceit I would guard you. I would be lenient, too, for I have been young, and I knew what it was to love." A tear started to his eye, but he brushed it away, and continued: "Promise me, then, only, that you will separate yourself from the society that now most charms you, till one short month is past, and then," he added, in a lower voice, "Fate will overpower that strong will."

"Give me your reasons," said Isidore.

"And where then," replied the Pilgrim, "would be the merit of your obedience? But I lay aside authority,—I entreat you to grant my request; would you see me

at your feet?"—and he appeared by his attitude, preparing to add the silent eloquence of bended knees to the energy of his voice; but Isidore forcing him to rise, assured him his wish so strongly expressed was sufficient, and secretly reflecting that his approaching occupation would in all probability fill that space of time, he promised what was required; at the same time, warning the Father not to interpret his compliance into an easiness of disposition on which he might afterwards endeavour to impose. The old man smiled at having gained his point, and wisely dropped the subject, resuming his discourse by inquiring of Isidore, whether he had yet discovered the residence of Monsieur Brunel.

Isidore was struck with surprise at this question, which seemed to indicate an acquaintance with his intentions that was

certainly unexpected, and his look would have easily led the Pilgrim, if he had put it at random, to perceive that it was not heard with indifference.

"But you need not tell me," he continued; "it is as needless for you to disguise your thoughts and views from me, as it is vain to attempt it. As a proof of what I say, I will unfold to you what is kept so secret in the breasts of a few, that you will perhaps imagine nothing but an agency more than human could have disclosed it to me. Yet I pretend to no such communion; I pray to be defended from the powers of evil, and ministers of good are too pure to approach one so sinful." Then seating himself with Isidore on a projection of the rock, more distant from the party within, he proceeded to relate what our readers are already acquainted with, of the history of

the family of De Courcy. Some of these particulars could not be publicly known, and Isidore's countenance so clearly betrayed his astonishment, that Father Bernardine said with some emotion—"Seek not to dive into secrets which sorrow has rendered sacred;—a few days of patience, and you shall know all. Acquainted with Madame Durand's chief intention in visiting the Mountains, I was now on my way to St. Florent, to give her the information she so much desires. Poor Brunel, whom his friends think either dead or impenetrably concealed, has long been known to me. This day you shall give to repose, before to-morrow's sun we will set out to where he drags on a hopeless, though unrepining existence. We must then separate, for, depending on your promise, I go to serve you, and you shall see how soon the spirit which has lived in shame,

can depart in glory. Did you make Madame Durand any promise of your quick return?" Isidore replied, that as his time of absence was uncertain, he had only engaged to inform her of his arrival at the place of his destination by means of one of his herdsmen, who was to return to him with whatever intelligence might have been received from Monsieur la Porte.

"'Tis well," said the Pilgrim, "let us now return to our host;" they accordingly entered the cell, where the Hermit and his two companions were already busily prepared in arranging a frugal meal, which would have appeared luxury to Simon Chas, when compared to the cold chestnuts and mouldy bread he had been regaled with. It cannot be said that much cordiality presided at the feast, but happily, all disputes were avoided;

and as the party was to break up early the next morning, they soon retired to rest, notwithstanding the poorness of the accommodations provided.

CHAPTER III.

And sometimes, too, a burst of rain,
Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends,
In one continuous flood. Still over head
The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
The deluge deepens; till the fields around
Lie sunk and flatted in the sordid wave.

THOMSON.

SOUND sleep quickly prevented Isidore from remarking any of the inconveniences of his situation, and the Pilgrim's entrance into his apartment on the following morning, first reminded him, that he was distant from his home and friends.

"Come, my son," cried the old man, "we have far to go this day, and the sun already shames your sloth. Those are happy who can sleep, but the prime of life and of the morn are not to be thus

wasted." Isidore, quickly springing up, was soon prepared to follow his conductor; and after taking leave of the Hermit and the Soldier, they set out, accompanied by Pierre. The sun, though it had not attained its meridian height, and was tempered by a low hanging mist, had, even at this early hour, heated the air in an unusual degree, and an oppressive feeling overcame the spirits, which it was impossible to resist. The birds sat mute on the motionless branches, save the mournful stockdove, which ceased not to utter its low lamenting cry. The few peasants they met, instead of singing a cheerful carol as they proceeded to their toil, dragged along their heavy limbs, as if still weary with the yesterday's labour, and the very dogs crept after them with lolling tongue and drooping eye, heedless of the game that every now and then sprang up close to the path.

Our travellers felt the weather's influence, and the listless discourse hardly served to beguile the tedious way. Their road lay over some of the most unfrequented parts of the Mountains; and as habitations were thinly scattered, they took their frugal meal and siesta under the spreading branches of a venerable chestnut, and again resumed their journey, though the heat had become still more oppressive, and black clouds, which in the morning hung loosely on the horizon, were now drifting to one point and threatening to pour their united weight of waters on the parched earth. Pierre, accustomed to the signs by which the mountaineers can prophecy an approaching storm, warned them to find a shelter for the night. As the sun sank, the air was not cooled, and low rolling thunder was heard at a distance like the pealings of artillery, or the dashing of the hoarse cataract

against the rocks that oppose its passage: no other sound broke the stillness, not a leaf was now stirring, and it became difficult even to breathe in the oppressive atmosphere. If for a moment a slight breeze sprung up, it seemed to proceed from the fiery heat of a furnace, and added fresh fever to the inflamed veins. It was happy for the weary travellers when the smoke ascending with difficulty from a few cottage chimneys, gave them the hope of a refuge; and that hope might almost be called a certainty, since where was the mountaineer, however poor, who would turn a stranger from his door in such a night as this? They, therefore, quickened their steps, and soon arrived at the small hamlet of Millac, where a most friendly greeting answered their knock at the first house they reached, which was that of a miller. For the sake

of his business, his habitation was placed near the bed of a small mountain river, whose stream reduced by long droughts to a narrow channel, had left on either side a wide expanse of gravelly shingles, called in that country the "grâve," and useful as a bleaching-ground to the fair maidens of the environs. Across this stretched a long row of deeply-worn stepping-stones, which by "their wearisome and needless length," might have excited a stranger's smile, had he not reflected what an immense deluge of waters must at times pour down to render them necessary, and pictured to himself the desolation that must accompany it. From the border of this stream, the hamlet, consisting of several narrow streets or lanes, ascended a slightly-rising ground, that was overlooked by the dark frowning mountains behind; and on its opposite

bank a small church, surmounted by its bell and cross, arose amidst the bare craggy rocks which formed an iron barrier to that side of the river. There was little vegetation near them, and even round the hamlet the patches of corn and pasture-land were intermixed with huge masses of the same rocks, that seemed to have been hurled at random by a giant arm.

The Miller, an honest hard-working man, with his wife and young family, had just finished supper; and while she prepared to supply the wants of their guests, he joined a party of village philosophers before the door, who were intently studying the appearance of the sky, and uttering their wise prognostics. The shoemaker, a fat, jolly, puffing, little fellow, declared such a night had not been seen for the last twenty years; the publican

feared it would spoil all the wine; and the baker that it threatened hail, and if it cut the ripening corn the price of flour must be raised: all united in thinking something extraordinary was about to happen, and none of the crowd thought of seeking their homes at the usual early hour. At first the joke, the song, the tale, went round; but as the thunder became louder, and the lightning flashed more vividly across the heavens, the merriment gradually ceased, and none spoke but of past disasters, tremendous whirlwinds, and overwhelming torrents. From time to time, the cautious Miller would enter to communicate his fears to the party within, or direct his man to carry such articles as might be in danger to a neighbour's house, situated far beyond the reach of calamity.

"You had better not, indeed you had

better not, Holy Father," he exclaimed to the Pilgrim, who having finished his supper, in apparent disregard of what was passing, now took his staff, as if intending to walk out. "You had best take my advice, and remain within such a night as this, for it's awkward for any of us natives, much more for a stranger, to be caught by the river."

"And what risk is there, my son?" replied the Pilgrim.

"Risk enough, as I fancy you'll say yourself before morning dawns," said the Miller. "Why if, as some think, the river comes down, as it's not over particular, it will as soon wet your Reverence's feet as another's. Don't you see how thick it is to the north-west? Don't you see how the clouds are drifting there, troop after troop, to pour upon us?"

The Pilgrim looked, and shook his head;

he was not easily to be turned from his purpose; and assuring the crowd, who now used every argument to press his stay, that he could easily return upon the approach of danger, as he was only going to the church to offer up prayers for their safety, they suffered him to cross the stepping-stones, some laughing at his folly and others pitying his incredulity. The night wore on, and though the thunder and lightning still continued, all but the most wary at length retired to their beds. But, about midnight, suddenly a distant rushing was heard: it was the well-known signal, and answered by the screams and shrieks of those who caught the sound. In an instant all were alive to fear and anxiety.—It came nearer and nearer: with the rapidity of thought, the waters rolled their dark and turbid floods along the channel of the river, and rising

as they advanced, soon transformed the level country into one immense sea, roaring and foaming as if to announce its threatened vengeance. The shouts were redoubled; real or apprehended danger set every one in motion: lights hung out from the windows cast a feeble glare upon the dismal scene. The women eagerly catching up their children from the cradle, flew to that part of the village which was usually free from danger, but which, from the immense body of water now approaching, was each instant lessening in space. The men, enraged at their own folly which had led them, though foreseeing the peril, to neglect providing against it, were carrying to places of safety all their moveables, and driving to the heights their mules and other cattle, made more stubborn by fear and the confusion of discordant sounds about them.

Everywhere was darkness and dismay. People pushed against each other as they hurried to and fro, shuddering to feel the water gradually reaching higher and higher round their naked limbs; and many articles of furniture which in the haste could not be carried off, and which, when the flood had forced open the doors, were borne along the streets, added to the difficulty of the passage.

At the moment of alarm, the Miller, who, from his situation, was the first assailed, had removed his family and guests to a high point, from whence as the faint rays of morning broke, the eye could stretch over the whole scene of devastation. The water still kept increasing, and by degrees expelled from their retreats many who thought themselves secure. As it carried along with it the soil of an immense tract of land, it was thick

and discoloured, and on its surface floated down, swift as the sight could follow, whole trees with all their leafy honours thick upon them, the thatch of ricks and cottages, hurdles, trusses of hay, and vines. On seeing how destructive had been its course, the mind sickened at each approaching object, from the apprehension that some unhappy victim of its rage might be drifted along by its resistless force. The houses appeared like islands in the watery waste, and even the high rocks on the opposite side were scarcely above its reach. On perceiving this, Isidore sprang forward; the friendly Miller, seizing him by the arm, called out that he was mad.

"No!" exclaimed Isidore, in extreme agitation; "but my poor old friend—but the Pilgrim!"

"I am sorry for your sake, that he is

your friend," replied the Miller; "but when there's no help, there's no good in fretting. Why you might as well attempt to stop the waters with my bolting-cloth, as to cross over to the church now. The current sets so strong that you would be out of sight before you could cry *Pecaire;* besides the chance of a good blow on the head from a piece of timber."

"I care not," answered Isidore; "it may possibly be that I fail, but I will perish sooner than remain here with the reflection that I would not venture my life to save that of a fellow-creature."

"Our fellow-creatures," cried the Miller, "ought to take care of themselves—each has enough to do for number one; why would not he mind what I said, and listen to good advice while he was able?"

All eyes were directed to the church, which still appeared above the tide, and

like a beacon in a stormy sea, caught from time to time a faint gleam from the rising sun. The water almost reached the gothic windows, for the strong iron-studded doors had hitherto repelled its force, and some fancied that they saw a withered hand beckoning for relief or waving a last farewell. On hearing this, Isidore would no longer be restrained; breaking away from all who attempted to hold him, he ran down the steep, and taking off such of his clothes as would have impeded his efforts, dashed into the torrent, cheered by the loud acclamations of those who admired his courage, though they dared not expect a happy result from his endeavours. Slow, indeed, did his progress seem to the hardy youth. All his strength and his ability in swimming could not preserve him from being perpetually borne down by the current far

below the point to which his wishes and his looks were directed, and the struggle against its impetuosity was almost more than his exertions could accomplish. Nothing could have supported him but the consciousness of fulfilling an imperious duty, and a reliance on that Being who can still the floods with a word. As often as he appeared at the moment of gaining a footing on the rocks, whose points were still to be seen, their slippery surface escaped from his grasp, and he was again thrown far back from his course: yet what will not perseverance effect?—he at length mastered every obstacle, gained the church, seized a projecting iron of the window, and the loud shouts of gladness from the eager spectators on the opposite side, hailed him as he leaped into the choir. There was no time to be lost; panting from his repeated efforts, and dizzy with

the noise and motion of the water, Isidore looked eagerly round, and discovered the old man, to increase his difficulties, extended in a fit on the steps of the altar. It was vain to attempt recalling him to his senses; the swelling tide was just level with the windows; he seized him in his arms, and springing again into the waves, achieved the arduous task of conveying his insensible and helpless burden from the top of one rock to another, till by the time the water had filled the whole area of the church, he was able, in a place of safety, to give vent to his feelings of gratitude towards the Power who had supported and preserved him amidst so many perils. As he bent over the old man, and observed the signs of anguish and horror still visible on his countenance, a feeling of affection towards him arose in his bosom, which he could rarely com-

mand. In this image of death, it seemed as if all the angry passions which at times broke out in Father Bernardine's conduct and conversation, had vanished, and nothing presented itself to his mind but the remembrance of that constant, though captious, care which he had taken of his childhood, and the interest with which he had till the last continued to watch over him. Isidore had so few friends, that the loss of one was with difficulty replaced, and he busied himself in chafing the Pilgrim's hands and endeavouring to recall animation, with all the eagerness that a son could display towards a beloved parent. The chill air of the morning baffled his efforts, and on looking round he was glad to discover still higher up, a small circular cabin, such as the peasants build of loose stones for a shelter from sudden showers when engaged at their

work. Thither he bore his aged friend, already drenched with the rain, which now began to fall in torrents.

It was noon before the Pilgrim opened his eyes, and when he did so, they displayed the unmeaning expression of one deprived either of sight or sense. He fixed his vacant looks on Isidore, who leant over him, half naked, his cheeks pale and his hair still dripping, and in a hollow voice demanded if his punishment was already begun, and whether he was appointed to be his tormentor. Isidore endeavoured by every means to calm his shattered spirits, but it was clear that at least for a time, the terror and agitation of his situation had affected his intellects, and the hours passed tediously, while he fruitlessly endeavoured to reason with him, and catch at every feeble ray of recollection, in order to lead him gradually

from the wild imaginations by which his mind appeared to be possessed. He would talk of great achievements to be wrought, which only wanted his presence; of vengeance to be inflicted, of which he was to strike the first blow; and would scream in the utmost anguish when he mistook the weakness of his stiffened limbs, for the force used by unseen enemies to detain him from his purposes. At length a step was heard; and Isidore, who had not dared remove from the tight grasp of the old man's hand, saw with infinite satisfaction Pierre enter the cabin, bringing with him his clothes and a basket of provisions. Without speaking he gave him the bundle, and gathering up some dry wood that lay about the floor, applied a flint to the blade of his knife, and soon produced a blaze which diffused warmth and cheerfulness around. He next spread

out the contents of the basket to the no small satisfaction of Isidore, who had tasted no food since the preceding night: then taking his place by the old man, spoke to him in a tone of so much decision, though tempered by gentleness, that he soon silenced his cries, and prevailing on him to swallow some cordial-liquor he had brought, the unhappy creature sank gradually into a state of stupor and repose. Isidore had now power to thank his visiter for his attentions: the latter, kinder in action than in speech, assured him, that but for the absolute force by which he had been withheld by the villagers, who considered one victim to humanity as sufficient, he should have followed him at the moment of danger, and left this trifling service to another. He added, "the water is at last decreasing, but it would still be impossible for Father

Bernardine to be carried across: perhaps we must even be compelled to pass the night here."

"Many an honest man is worse off," replied Isidore, as the genial heat of the fire and a cup of excellent brandy made the blood flow more briskly in his veins; "I only fear for the Father, whose age and late alarm make a warmer shelter almost indispensable."

"Fear not for him," said Pierre, "he is more accustomed than you are to such a lodging; few are the nights that he reposes on a softer bed."

"Indeed!" said Isidore; "long as I have known him, I am still in a great measure ignorant of his mode of life: there is something about him which checks my curiosity, and yet so mysterious are his movements, that a spirit would scarcely leave fewer traces of its course."

"The track is often deep that is but faintly seen," said Pierre. "You do well to restrain your curiosity. Not all the love Father Bernardine bears to you would save you from his anger, if he found you to be either a spy or a traitor."

"It would be difficult to be the latter," said Isidore, smiling, "since the confidence he so often promises to repose in me, is always withheld, and from his appearance I cannot but think his secret will ere long be buried with him in the grave."

Pierre shook his head, and looking round as if he feared the very walls might prove telltales, in a lower voice replied: "Mortal life may be lengthened by more than mortal means. It has been said, mark me, for others can vouch the truth of the tale, that Father Bernardine is master of his own existence, and none

can deprive him of it, till it is his will to depart; not till then need you fear for him, but his spirit thirsteth to be free, and wo betide those who by their arts or their opposition, force him still to remain in bondage. Marked you not, how the water respected him, and dared not approach till he was safe."

Isidore could not help thinking his appearance at the critical moment was of more service to the Pilgrim than thi fancied charm, but he saw it would be useless to argue the point, as opinions which are established in opposition to reason are not easily made to submit to her decision; he endeavoured, therefore, to look convinced, and Pierre was not inclined to suspect in others a scepticism he was very free from himself. He remained for some time silent, and as he gazed on the withered form beside him, whose short,

quick breathing, seemed almost to denote the last gasp of expiring nature, he internally wondered at the lofty pretensions by which one who seemed already on the verge of the tomb deceived the credulous, and perhaps was even himself the victim of his own delusions. And what, thought Isidore, is after all the motive of this deception? To this he could make no reply, but he recollected how often such deluders set forward without a fixed intention, and gathering strength as they proceeded, were led on by the weakness of their followers to use and abuse the power thus unexpectedly put into their hands. It was also difficult to reconcile what he had just heard with the only secret Father Bernardine had long since confided to him, but the more he reflected on the subject, the more anxious he became to separate his destiny from that of a man, who, what-

ever might be his designs, scrupled not to employ any arts to gain his end, and who seemed to possess so powerful an influence over the minds of all who approached him, and evidently without at the same time endeavouring to command their esteem. Whether he was to be ranked as an enthusiast or an impostor, still he was an unsafe guide through life, and it rather lessened his reluctance to leaving his native country, when he reflected that it would at the same time afford him an excellent opportunity for throwing off a yoke, which chance had imposed and habit strengthened. In free and desultory conversation, thus carried on in low whispers, the two young men passed the remainder of the day, and as they became better acquainted, became also mutually more pleased with each other. There was not an entire accordance in their sentiments

and opinions, but there was in both an unreserved frankness that is sure to win those who can understand its value; and in the rough untutored mind of Pierre, which owed no obligation but to nature, Isidore had sufficient discrimination to admire what might have been, in what, notwithstanding so many disadvantages, already was. Pierre did not scruple to confide to him the high imaginations respecting his parentage which had at times possessed his thoughts; but these, he added, Father Bernardine had assured him were unfounded, though upon what he grounded his opinion he refused to inform him, and it might indeed be presumed to be incorrect, and spoken merely with a view to dissuade him from expectations which it would be so difficult to realize.

"We are all children," said Pierre,

" and at first, I own, I loathed the truth that checked my ambitious aspirings, but the folly did not last long; I examined myself—I studied what I was in the opinion of others, and found, that what was worth any thing in me, circumstances could not change. I thus learnt, that all I fancied I had lost, was but the flimsy drapery of life, and that poor, contemned, and disregarded by the world, when ranging at liberty my native wilds, harming none, and fearing not that any could harm me, I was inferior to no titled baron or wealthy lordling, and that I might well leave such empty honours for those who have not that within themselves which can force respect without them. You will smile at my boastings, but you know not that the breath of the mountain, while it strengthens the limbs, kindles the spirit also; and I have breathed an air far dif-

ferent from the scented gales that enervate those who would presume to look down upon me. You must pardon some roughness in a savage, untamed and uncaressed: the lion might perhaps be taught to lie down and be fondled like the spaniel, but he would lose all the nobler qualities for which he is admired: I do not despise those who have been brought up more softly, but I know not how to imitate them, and I cannot degrade myself by attempting it unsuccessfully."

Isidore assured him, that his first feeling was that of admiration at the manner in which he could calmly resign all hope of what most men are so ambitious to possess.

"There was no merit in it," said Pierre, "I soon felt it was not my place, and could not form my happiness; if I had not, I should most probably have learnt

to detest the man who awoke me from my dream, as much as I now honour him." He then rose to see if Father Bernardine were still composed, and finding he had not awoke, threw himself down upon some old straw that lay on one side of the cabin, and was soon, in dreams, transported to the glades and rocks of his loved mountains, where he had enjoyed life, though deprived of all that many think, renders it supportable. Isidore, after contemplating his sleeping companions for some time, and contrasting in his mind the excellencies and defects of each, suffered his thoughts to wander to the cottage, where he fondly hoped that Rose was already sunk in peaceful slumber; by degrees, his ideas becoming more confused, the sudden kindling of the sparks no longer roused him from his revery, or broke the drowsy spell, and his cares and joys were

also soon drowned in complete forgetfulness.

On the following morning, the Pilgrim, though still weak as an infant, was much more rational, and Isidore sallied forth, to ascertain if the state of the country would permit of their returning to the village. How different was the scene that now presented itself, from that of the preceding day. The stream, purified by its own velocity, now poured its clear current along the channel which human industry had marked for it; and as it rolled over its pebbly bed, its murmurs resembled the pettish sobbings of a child, when its impotent rage has been restrained. Sparkling in the sunbeam, it seemed to throw up myriads of diamonds, wherever a stone or rock checked the rapidity of its career; and as it dashed over the opposing mill-dam, the light foam rose like

wreaths of snow upon the brilliant surface. There was a brightness on the ground still covered with the wet deposit from the flood, that twinkled and glittered like the deceitful mirage; and across the deep blue sky, the changeful fleecy clouds were drifting before a soft western breeze, and sweeping their dark shadows over the mountains. To increase the liveliness of the scene, what a noise, what a cheerful bustle greeted the freshness of the morning and the returning sunshine! Troops of idle urchins were seen flinging the large drop-net, to entangle the myriads of young fry which had been forced along by the current; others were sporting in the clear wave, with limbs deeply bronzed like a troop of young Indians. The men were clearing away the mud which had filled every street, and defaced every garden; and the women, not displeased with

the bustle, though rating at the labour, were joyously employed at the river's brink, in restoring their household goods to their pristine cleanliness, and eagerly relating the events of the night, to those at least as well acquainted with them as they were themselves.

With some difficulty the two young men conveyed the Pilgrim across the stepping stones. On reaching the opposite bank, the whole crowd ran to meet them with eager curiosity, and that interest which leads the simple villager to participate so warmly in the joys and the sorrows of others. The escape of the old man, seemed to them nothing less than a miracle, and so highly did they extol the intrepidity of Isidore, that he was glad to retire from their admiration, into the first open door where they seemed likely to meet with quiet. But no sooner were

they arrived, than Father Bernardine, whose restless mind could ill grant even to himself the repose he so much required, called Pierre to him, and giving him in a low voice the needful directions, dismissed him to pursue his journey. Isidore was more concerned at his departure, than he cared to express. It appeared that the Pilgrim would not for some time be equal to the fatigues of travelling; to leave him in such a state among strangers, however hospitable and kind, was impossible, and to remain, might subject him to unforeseen inconveniences, and prove extremely injurious to his affairs. These thoughts were probably visible on his expressive countenance, for the Father, after considering him for some time in silence, clasped his hands before his face, and burst into tears. Surprised and shocked at this uncommon emotion, Isidore eagerly

inquired if he was ill, and was on the point of seeking some assistance, when the old man, recovering himself, said, in a voice milder than usual,—" My son, leave me not; it is your presence alone that pains me, but it is also your presence alone that can give me ease. You last night ventured your life for me, and I feel towards you, all the gratitude your conduct would deserve had the benefit been greater.—Yes, you have saved my life, and little as it is worth, it is yours, more firmly yours, if possible, than ever. I swear by every thing sacred, which I have either slighted, disowned, or suffered for, to spend it in your service, with a zeal equal to that by which I am devoted to the one great object of my being."

" My good Father," replied Isidore, " I have never doubted your kind intentions, but I am still ignorant by what

means you can be of service to me; and, indeed, my desires are so limited, that I feel a perfect reliance that my own powers will suffice to gratify them."

The old man smiled contemptuously—"Your desires, Isidore! Ask the unfledged eagle if it aims at soaring with a stedfast eye fixed on the orb of day?—ask the young steed if he feels in his unstrung sinews, the force that is to stem the fury of the battle, and shake the earth with his prancings? Your desires! I tell you you cannot have formed any, at least, you ought not, and must wait till I guide you to the destined height, before you look on the expanse around, and exultingly say, there, and there shall be my quarry." After a short silence, he continued,—"Listen to me—I wept just now, because I saw your impatience, and I felt that my weak limbs could not keep pace with

your ardour. Leave me not, my son, a few short days will again strengthen me, and as you would deserve an old man's blessing, bear with an old man's infirmities. But lest you should think me unmindful of your wishes, I will tell you, that I have sent Pierre on the most important of your designs. He will conduct old Brunel to Madame Durand. If life permits, I must, by a certain day, be again in the low country; you shall then return to your employments, and fulfil every duty you may be called upon for. Can you consent to this?"

It was not in Isidore's nature to refuse an act of kindness, when his own gratification was to be the only sacrifice, and he determined with all the patience he could master, to await the Pilgrim's returning strength, if strength should ever return. A violent shivering fit with which

Father Bernardine was seized, put an end to this conversation,—he was taken to bed; during the night, his fever increased to a degree that would have been alarming, even in one better able to resist the violence of disease, and his extreme irritability served to increase the fire which burned in his veins. No entreaties could prevail on him to mention any friend whose presence at such a juncture might soothe his sufferings; no civility on the part of his host or the neighbours would persuade him to allow of their assistance. Scarcely for a moment would he permit his young friend to quit his side, and even in the tossings of delirium he would listen to his voice, and become more composed. Days and weeks slowly and painfully rolled on, and every aggravation was added that could increase Isidore's uneasiness. It was impossible for him to

feel assured that Pierre had fulfilled the commission given him, and if he had not, what would be the opinion formed by Madame Durand of his attention to her commands? Rose, too, would be anxious on his account, on receiving no intelligence of his safety, and the tidings respecting Monsieur la Porte, which he looked forward to with so much eagerness, it was not in his power to obtain. He at length resolved to despatch a messenger to St. Florent, as the only means of relieving their uneasiness; but before the time allotted for his return, he had himself left Millac, and the trial of this tedious delay was ended, which had only been borne from the consciousness of alleviating the sufferings of a fellow-creature.

CHAPTER IV.

Goodnature is a fool,
And such men hold her; save at a pinch,
When she is courted to endure the rubs
That wiser folks provoke.

ANON.

In the mean time, Vidal, delivered from the presence of those who chiefly opposed his plans, set himself calmly and composedly to the task of completing his vengeance; and the part which Isidore had acted on the evening of Monsieur la Porte's arrest, if possible, increased his eagerness to dispose of him. But as he could no longer reckon with certainty on the co-operation of the Prior, policy required that he should proceed with some

caution. Of the various means that presented themselves to his mind, none seemed more suitable than that which has already been hinted—his being included in the number to be drawn that summer to serve in the army, for which just then such forced and unusual levies were making, that it was a moment peculiarly favourable for any little transactions that would not bear too close a scrutiny. In the lists of the present year, therefore, the name of Isidore Delorme was placed, and it was also the first drawn. By what secret of office such things were formerly effected it is not for us to inquire, but rather to rejoice that it has died with its authors. It was in vain for his poor mother to urge the exemption of only sons, on whose labour the care of his little paternal property depended; it was in vain several of the

neighbours ventured to second her petition; and Isidore, while ministering to the health of his aged parent, was thus to be forced into a career for which, notwithstanding his unquestioned bravery, he felt no inclination, and doomed at the will of an enemy to part from all to whom love, gratitude, and esteem bound him. The triumphant Consul commanded his instant appearance; and, as his absence from Vallerargues prevented his compliance, two of the military quartered in the nearest town were despatched in search of him, with orders to take him immediately to head-quarters, without even suffering him to return to his native village, and soften, by one farewell, the bitterness of his widowed parent's feelings. Those who heard the orders, execrated the needless severity, and an increased interest in the fate of the young man was

the natural consequence of every attempt on the part of Vidal to oppress and degrade him.

It cannot be imagined that Leah Coste was ignorant of these machinations, or insensible to their probable result, and her sagacity was soon busied in endeavouring, by underhand contrivances, to defeat the Consul's schemes. It was useless for him to plan without calculating on the force of female opposition, and he would have done wisely to win her beforehand to his side, if there was any art he could use to secure the co-operation of a damsel verging on antiquity to a scheme by which her last chance of obtaining a husband was to be so decidedly lessened. The Consul himself was not more elated by his hopes than she was cast down by her fears, of the effect which Isidore's absence would have in subduing Rose's

heart. Amongst her motives for counteracting his plans, she certainly could not rank making two of her fellow-creatures happy; but neither will we pretend to say the asperity of her temper was so strong as to lead her to forego her own interest lest she should conduce to such a fortunate result; and she pursued her aims with the fixedness of purpose which philosophers account the quality most likely to insure success, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, and unmoved by shame or apprehension, feelings which sometimes weaken the powers of more sensitive mortals. Her whole thoughts were now bent upon one point—she was determined to be married, and as she could not help owning to herself that the age of choice was well nigh past, she had little difficulty in concentrating all her arts to win the only wealthy accessible bache-

lor in the circle of her acquaintance. It was just when the absence of Rose had emboldened her to pay a few additional civilities, and to lavish on her cousin some significant smiles and glances which she imagined were received with unusual complacency, that her faithful informers brought her, after the evening's gossip, the news we have just related, on which they commented and enlarged with a most torturing and pertinacious loquacity. Vainly did Leah doubt, contradict, and suspect—the fact was stubborn, and the inferences to be drawn from it, such as they declared none, except those who were pre-determined not to see, could deny. Joyful was the moment when they retired, and yet they only left her overwhelmed by a conviction she could not resist. Yet, as the proverb says, while there is life there is hope; and Leah was

not disposed to relinquish hers, at least till the nuptial benediction should put an end to it for ever. It was necessary to act, and to act with speed. Vengeance and love she knew would do their work quickly, and it was her task to prove a woman's wiles can outstrip them in the race. The chief difficulty lay in finding an agent fit for her purpose, which was, secretly to inform Madame Durand of the Consul's project, in order that, by her employing a little money, which Leah, in common with most persons who cannot command its assistance, judged to be omnipotent, it might be counteracted. This seemed, indeed, the only course to pursue; and, as her secret motives were not likely to be discovered, she flattered herself with gaining also much commendation, if not a suitable reward, from those whose interests she should serve,

while furthering her own designs. Her first idea was to repair to Madame la Porte; but besides that she held that lady's abilities for intrigue rather cheap, she was aware how greatly her apprehension of the Consul's power had been increased by the misfortune of her husband, and she judged it wiser to seek the humbler residence of Madeleine Delorme, certain of at least finding her well-disposed to her scheme. Scarcely was she comfortably fixed near the little fire, unheeded by the disconsolate widow, who sat listlessly twirling the thread, while the spindle rolled idly on the floor, when a low tap at the door announced a new guest, and Simon Chas, his head bent forward, with a look of commiseration and sympathy, entered the room.

"Come in, neighbour," said Leah, her countenance assuming a look of unwonted

condescension; "take a chair by me; it's long since I have seen you, and I must say you don't often look in upon me."

"Indeed," said Simon, "I am very like the rats, who never visit an empty house when they can go to a full barn. I can't live upon chit-chat, as I am told some of the women do; wherever I go, I must have my belly full, be it of what it may."

"And indeed, Simon," retorted the damsel, "you might wait till you're asked, and not show yourself so ready for an invitation; do you think I keep a restaurateur's for comers and goers? A fine company I should have to waste my substance, and laugh at me for my pains; but if you can, do lay aside the thoughts of your supper for a short time, and tell me if you are inclined to earn a decent reward by a little exertion?"

"Inclined," said Simon, "ay, that I

am, provided the trouble is not very great, and that I may spend the whole of the reward myself."

"What think you of a Louis, a golden Louis?" said Leah.

"Why," said Simon, opening his eyes and clenching his hands, as if he already held the prize, "tell me only how it is to be got, and I'll earn it, if it's to carry my master on my back to the place where he's going so fast, but where, I'm thinking, he'll arrive, after all, too soon for his own comfort."

"It's well for you, Simon, that I'm your friend now," said Leah, "or I should think it right to repeat your insolence to him."

"And it's better still for me," replied the other, "that I don't care whether you are or not, for you're no man's friend long together."

"Then you don't care for your master, don't you?" cried Leah.

"Not a jot," said Simon.

"You don't mind his blows?"

"Not a rush."

"I'm happy to hear that," said Leah; "for in this service that is required of you, I fear you will have to run the risk of a few."

"There's no glory without danger," replied Simon, "and a Louis will heal a good many stripes. But to the point; you're always so long coming there."

"You shall hear," said Leah, "and, my good Madeleine, listen too, for it's all for your advantage." The three chairs were drawn into a closer circle, and Leah, holding out her fore-finger as if to command attention, proceeded as follows:—

"You know, Simon, that your master has had this poor woman's son drawn to serve in the army?"

"Yes," said Simon, "it's not the first mistake of the kind he has made."

"Now," continued Leah, "what distress this must bring upon Madame Durand, upon his mother, upon Monsieur la Porte, too, the reverend Pastor, should he ever return, and upon the young Rose, who all the world knows has a tender and lawful affection for him."

"Truly," said Simon, "it will be a moving scene when they are first told of his being put upon bread and water in a dungeon, for turning his toes in and his elbows out." Poor Madeleine dropped her spinning, and drew her handkerchief before her eyes.

"Bread and water!" exclaimed Leah; "the poor youth! and must he suffer all this, when we know that he is exempt by law. Can nothing save him?"

"Nothing I ever heard of," said Simon, "but a good round sum, which has saved many a one before him, and that I believe

you've not got in your strong box, Mademoiselle; and if you had, you'd be inclined to leave it there."

"No, I have it not," said Leah, sighing; "but are there not some who take an interest in his welfare, and also have the way as well as the will to serve him."

Simon looked at her for some time, as if to fathom her meaning, and then exclaimed, "I know what you would be at; you think Madame Durand might lend a helping hand."

"I did not say so," replied Leah; "remember if any blame falls, *I* did not say so first."

"No, but you thought it," said Simon, "and that I'll swear, because you never speak out what you think; you leave that for others to do."

"And will you inform her of the affair?" asked Leah cautiously.

" I," said Simon, much alarmed, and his courage failing as he saw more clearly what was intended, " not for the best doublet and hose I ever coveted."

" Ah, Simon!" exclaimed the poor mother, who had hitherto continued silent, " if you will but go, a widow's blessing shall follow you, and these aged hands shall be daily raised in prayers for your safety."

" But think you all that would save me from a broken head when I came back?" said Simon. " All the world unfortunately knows that there is not so good-natured a creature alive as Simon Chas, but I don't see that's a reason why I am to burn my paw like the cat in the fable, every time there's a scrape to be got off. No, no; I'm sorry for the lad, but I know my master too well to think he's gone so far to be thwarted

by us three, wise as we may think ourselves."

"But the reward, Simon; think of that," said Leah; "there is, first of all, a clear conscience, having done your best to rescue innocence from oppression."

"A clear conscience!" said Simon; "I couldn't sell it for a groat."

"Then there's the pleasure of making two lovers happy."

"Very delightful for them," he continued, "but nothing of a sight to me."

"Add to that, the thanks of Madame Durand."

"Which would not keep hunger and thirst from my little body for one single day."

"Nay," exclaimed Leah, "if these motives will not content you, I must say you're a sordid wretch, without a touch of pity or humanity to warm you."

While this dialogue was going on, Madeleine arose, and opening a small press, drew from it a purse, which she now put into Simon's hand, saying, "Take that, my friend; I am sorry it is not more, but if you go, though I work night and day, it shall be doubled on your return."'

This last argument had more weight, and joined perhaps to the look of patient sorrow, and the tremulousness of the poor widow's hand as she held out the purse, softened his heart. "This is speaking to some purpose," he exclaimed; "here is something to hold by in the midst of every mischance; thus provided against difficulties, a man feels his courage wax stronger, and it remains only to plan how I may best execute your design with secresy and despatch, for I am no Don Quixote, to raise difficulties for the sake of seeing how well I can get out of them."

The fertile imagination of Mademoiselle Coste was not wanting in expedients, now that her desire was on the point of being accomplished, and before they separated, they had arranged what excuse would best account for Simon's absence during two or three days from the village, in which time he was to proceed to St. Florent. Although the protection promised him by the Prior, and the manner in which he had seen his master treated by his patron, had somewhat diminished Simon's fear of the Consul, yet he thought it wisest to run no risk of detention, by setting out before daylight the next morning; leaving with one of his neighbours the task of stating both to his wife and his master, that a sudden and urgent call had forced him away to his sister's or his first cousin's, or some one of that numerous and remote kindred which the poor keep up through

so many generations, and how faithfully he would return, as soon as the object of his journey would permit. With a gay heart, therefore, he set out to the mountains, pursuing a different route from that which he had taken with his master. But before we notice his arrival there, it is perhaps expedient to mention some more agreeable intelligence which served to cheer Madame Durand and Rose in their solitude. This was contained in a letter received from Monsieur la Porte, who, after relating his reception from the Count de St. Romain, proceeded circumstantially to inform them of the occurrences that had befallen him since his departure. Nothing, perhaps, in the world of wonders on which he had now entered, excited so much astonishment in the good man's mind, as the little attention paid to his own case. That a Pastor should be separated from his at-

tached people, a husband and father from an affectionate wife and child, a man at his advanced time of life forced to tear himself from his home, when even the breaking in upon a daily habit was a trial, appeared circumstances of such importance, that he was partly inclined to expect all other business would be suspended until such a flagrant act of injustice was repaired; on the contrary, the great personages who were to decide his fate, considered it as a trifle hardly worth a moment's consideration, thought it no bad joke for the good Pastor to see Paris for nothing, or abused the stupid blockhead who had been so officiously zealous as to interfere at all with him. Even the Ex-Intendant had probably by this time forgotten the service he had rendered his creature, and Vidal, better acquainted than La Porte with the ways of the world,

had speculated upon this indifference, and flattered himself that he had ample time before him to commence his schemes against Rose whenever the most favourable opportunity should occur. But for the care of Madame Durand, he would in all probability have speculated justly, and many months might have elapsed ere a time would have been fixed for arranging what was of so little consequence, in comparison with the fate of kingdoms and of courtiers. The Count de St. Romain, however, had acquired, it is impossible to say where, some visionary and romantic ideas of equity and justice; and considered that, independent of those distinctions which the claims of a well-regulated society have introduced into the world, there are some advantages to which every man has as equal a right as he has to air and sunshine; and amongst these he

reckoned, that whether prince or peasant, he has a right to be heard, and either absolved or condemned as speedily as circumstances will allow. Still, before taking any steps, he was desirous of seeing Monsieur la Porte himself, and a day was fixed for him to dine at the Count's hotel in the Rue de Richelieu.

It should not be considered as any way derogatory to the good Pastor's philosophy, if we allow that his senses were, for the first few minutes, dazzled by his introduction to a splendour which was, perhaps, never carried to a greater height than in the mansions and mode of living of the ancient French nobility; and that he almost shrunk under the contemptuous airs of the Count's numerous and pampered attendants. But the feeling soon subsided; accustomed to measure all he saw by the Christian's standard, and to

read nothingness and vanity inscribed on every thing here below, he had not been half an hour in the saloon before he began to think his host the only object worthy of his attention there, and to lose sight of the gaudy trappings of rank in admiration of the true independent nobility he displayed. The Count received him not only with the polite hospitality claimed by a stranger, but with the distinguishing kindness due to one who had experienced oppression and distress, and having learned the circumstances of his case, undertook in a short time to have all difficulties removed. Accordingly, he took the opportunity of a dinner he was to give to some persons high in office, to engage La Porte to meet them, and making the cause his own, quickly obtained what he desired—a promise that no proceedings should be entered into for such a

venial offence, and a free permission for the Pastor to return to his sacred duties. La Porte received the information with the gratitude he always felt towards those who befriended him ; and though anxious to acquaint his family with the good news, lingered till the guests had withdrawn to thank his benefactor with all the sincerity and eloquence of real feeling.

" Say no more, I beg, Sir," replied the Count, " or you will make me ashamed of being able to do so little. I have in my turn a favour to request of you, which I fear will be harder to grant, for I know how much you must desire to return to your home; but without any compliment, for that is a language I do not deal in, your company would for a short time be not only extremely agreeable but beneficial to me ; and if you can grant me this favour, I propose that we should travel

together when I set out to take possession of my new government—I should think that would be about the end of July. Meanwhile, if you have any curiosity to see the strange sights of Paris, my almoner will be happy to attend you; you have seen him; I don't think there is any danger of your falling out on theological subjects, and on all others I doubt not but you are pretty much of the same mind."

La Porte declared his readiness to await the Count's pleasure, but expressed his astonishment as to the subject on which he could make himself useful.

"Why," said the Count, "what I want is the truth; if I am in search of a fine picture, or a beautiful statue, I spare no pains in obtaining it, and think myself happy to fall in with the artist who can gratify my wish: what I seek now, is far

more important; and, from the manner in which you have spoken of the man who sought to do you so much injury, I think I may safely conclude, that you are not easily warped by private interest and passion. It is important for me to have some knowledge of the people with whom I am going to reside: I am told there is a spirit of disaffection still lurking amongst them; do you think the report is exaggerated?"

"As far as my experience goes," replied La Porte, "I should certainly say it was. I have heard of complaints, indeed, but saw no symptoms of their being acted upon."

"It is hardly, however," said the Count, "to such a man as you they would come with their designs, unless indeed under the seal of confession; but I believe you have not, like us good Catholics, that con-

venient sacrament in your church. Disturbances are very generally excited by those who care little for the approbation of their Pastor, men of unsettled, unprincipled habits; and it is the severity with which we treat them, that rouses the better-disposed to stand up against what they consider as oppression. I shall be particularly anxious to know from you whether the people are happy, whether they are industrious, even if they complain when any thing goes wrong. It is a practice you know with mothers when they do not hear their children making a noise, to suspect that they are in some mischief. But it is late, and you must have letters to write; if you are not deranged by my early hours, breakfast with me to-morrow, and I will make you better acquainted with my almoner; he is a good man, and liberal in his sentiments."

With a cordial shake of the hand, the Count wished him good night. In consequence of this arrangement they met frequently; and the Count derived from Monsieur la Porte more real intelligence on the subjects he desired than he had even expected from one of his retired habits. His esteem increased daily, and he felt truly grieved that in so short a time their constant intercourse must cease. These particulars, however, La Porte recommended his family to keep entirely secret from the whole village; and difficult as the task was, Madame la Porte was not known even to give a hint of the honour to which her husband was thus unexpectedly promoted.

CHAPTER V.

And now she roams
The dreary waste; there spends the livelong day,
And there, unless when charity forbids,
The livelong night.

COWPER.

It is not to be supposed that the hours passed very gaily at St. Florent. After a short interval, Madame Durand again felt her health decline, and began to apprehend that her wishes would be ill seconded by an enfeebled frame. Rose, unused to sorrow, had to lament her separation from those who were dearest to her in the world, and felt this the more acutely in proportion as her regard was concentrated to a few objects. It was

difficult in such a spot, and in circumstances so unsettled, to attempt any regular employment, and a weary restlessness rendered almost every occupation irksome. The loveliness of the weather led them constantly into the enjoyment of the open air and wild beauties of those romantic regions where the tempered beams of a southern sun were so delightful to the feelings.

The woods around St. Florent were intersected with those numerous and immense caverns which, during the religious wars, had served at once for hospitals and magazines, arsenals and granaries. The memory of past events had hallowed these retreats with an almost religious feeling amongst the descendants of those valiant martyrs; and many were the tales which they had to relate of the scenes these strong holds of nature had witnessed; the

devotion with which even timid women had braved every risk to carry assistance and consolation to the sufferers laid up there by their glorious wounds: and never, perhaps, were compassion and tenderness, united with courage and zeal, carried to greater heights than by those who thus exposed themselves to every peril, not in the ardour of the battle, but by the dying couch of the helpless and forlorn. They told, too, of the barbarity with which the Miquelets, as the troops serving against the Protestants were sometimes called, had often tracked them to their dens, and completed the work of slaughter. In some of them, the blackened rocks still bore marks of the rude manufacture of gunpowder, an article so essential to the safety of the little army, and which, unable to procure in sufficient quantities in the low lands, they contrived to fabricate

by intense labour in these recesses. Remains of broken casks, stocks of old guns, blood-stained swords, old hand-mills, and rusty mortars were often found concealed, and recalled the spectator's thoughts to the times of warfare and confusion, when life was one continued struggle, and the giant strength of despair alone prevented slavery from polluting that hard-fought land. Nor was the spirit yet laid; nor did the eye of the mountaineer flash less brightly, as he grasped the blade some hero of old had wielded, and felt that the oppressor would find as strong a barrier as of yore in the breasts of men who prized their freedom more than life, and their religion above either.

In the midst of these woods, a poor female continually wandered. She was past the bloom and loveliness of youth, but there was a look of sorrow in her

countenance, and of despair in her full black eye, that excited in the spectator a throb as deep as it is the lot of suffering beauty generally to excite. Her dress was scarcely sufficient for a covering, yet put on with an attention to appearance, that bespoke the habits of happier days, and her long dark hair, loosened from every restraint, hung over her bare and sun-burnt shoulders.

"Who is this unfortunate creature?" said Madame Durand, one day to her attendant, a poor girl of the village, "I meet her in all my walks—she seems in great distress, and yet I could never perceive that she asked for relief."

"I know no more than you do, Madame," replied the girl; "we are all as kind to her as we can be, but I think she is ashamed of begging, so we don't wait for her to ask."

"Poor creature," said Madame Durand, "I should like to speak to her; do you think she would be offended by my notice?"

"No, indeed, Madame, quite the reverse, she always seems to like being spoken to, if it is but kindly done."

Madame Durand and Rose drew near the object that excited their interest. She was seated on a rough stone which had been accidentally detached from the craggy rock behind, and was placed opposite an opening in the wood that presented the view of a scene of varied beauty, over which, at that moment, the shades of evening had already begun to steal. Her face was concealed by her hands, and it would have been uncertain whether her thoughts were lost in sleep, or in the confusion of indistinct recollections, but that they could hear a few faint notes of a plaintive song breathed from her lips. Rose

gently laid her hand upon her arm, and she started, as if alarmed by the touch. Without rising, the poor creature shook back from before her face, her luxuriant tresses, and looked at the strangers with an earnest gaze, that seemed to demand the cause of their intrusion.

"Who are you?" said Madame Durand; "I wish to be your friend if you will let me, and will tell me how I can serve you; I know well by experience what it is to suffer."

"You suffer!—you!" exclaimed the Maniac, "and you can smile still!" Then in a lower voice, she added, "Did you leave your father's house, and laugh when you were told the old man was dead, and that you had done the deed?"

Madame Durand involuntarily shuddered, though the poor creature's feelings had probably coloured too highly this pic-

ture of her guilt. "We have all much to repent of," she replied, "but you have heard that there is mercy even for the most abandoned, and if I can persuade you to seek for it, I shall perhaps be able to restore you to comfort, if not to happiness."

"Talk not of happiness to me," cried the Maniac, dejectedly, "the time for that is gone by: my happiness is flown for ever; I have had wings given me to follow it, but as I stretched them out to reach it, the bright vision flew away, and the fiend who had cheated me, thrust me back deep, deeper than the bowels of the earth. If you knew what days and nights he makes me pass, and when I think to hide from him, in a moment he is at my side, and tells me I am his, and that I have sworn to be his. Beware of him! he is always lurking about where young girls

play, to turn their sportiveness into endless torment." She looked fearfully round, as if her disordered imagination pictured some of those visions of horror near, with which her mind was so often tormented.

Madame Durand seated herself on the rock by her side, and taking her hand, wiped away a tear that trickled down her hollow cheek. "But you were not always thus," she said; "you must once have had friends to care for you, and protect you?"

"Friends!" she exclaimed wildly, "they called themselves so, but they were deceivers. You must never tell to mortal man what mortal eye cannot look upon; but when the evil one made me a scoff, a derision, a very mark of shame to the whole world, these friends fled from me. It was a bitter moment that. Can I have sinned as I have suffered? and must I always suffer thus? I saw them, how

they turned from me; I saw the sneering look, the contemptuous eye; I heard the taunt, the curse, the bitter laugh of scorn, and I fled, but the anguish followed me. Oh, lady! sinful as I am, you would pity me if you knew what I have gone through. When I lay me down to sleep, the spirits whispered such dreadful words in my ear, that I was forced to scare them away by my screams. They made the worms creep out of my food, so that I loathed the very sight of it; they turned the water into blood when I drew near to drink; and the air, which is so soft and gentle to others, is like the breath of fire when it blows against my aching head. The rocks have shaken from their firm foundations to crush me; the trees have shed poisonous dews upon me, and there is none to whom I could go for help. I have fled from the arms that would have

sheltered me from every peril; from the eye that rained down tears instead of curses at the thought of my guilt, the tongue of him who spoke kindly to me, even when I broke his heart. Yes, yes, that heart is broken, or I should not be as you now see me."

A burst of grief relieved her, and her sobs, as she hid her face in her hands, and rocked herself in speechless anguish on the stone seat, were so piteous, that neither Madame Durand nor Rose could restrain their tears, and even the little peasant girl rubbed her eyes, surprised at her own emotion. They continued long silent, for Madame Durand, ignorant of her history, knew not what subjects of consolation to suggest, and the poor creature seemed unwilling to enter again into conversation. As it was growing late, the ladies prepared to return to the cot-

tage, when every ear was arrested by some distant notes so soft and solemn, that it might almost be imagined, the spirits, who delight in watching over the wild beauties which spring far from the sight of man, were pouring forth their evening tribute of sweet sounds. The voices drew nearer; at times they swelled into the full triumphant chorus, and then sunk to the low murmur that scarcely breathed upon the gale. A long line of waving lights appeared in the opposite wood, emerging from a deep and dark glen, and winding up the path which led from the village; and as the moon rose from behind a heavy clump of thick-spreading chestnuts, its bright beams shone upon a procession of young females, each carrying a taper, who, with pious feelings, were following the village Priest to the death-bed of some departing penitent.

The "ora pro nobis" was now distinctly heard responding to the deep voice of the venerable Curé, as he walked in front under a canopy, arrayed in his sacred vestments, the hallowed cross borne before him, and carrying in his aged hands the sacrament, the symbol of his faith. So calmly soothing was the scene, that each of the party, scarcely daring to breathe, remained buried in contemplation.

"Who is dead?" at length, exclaimed the Maniac, "I hear the death song in the narrow valley."

"He's not dead yet," said the peasant girl, "but not far from it I fancy, or Father Paul would not leave his home so late. I don't even know who is dying, unless it's the poor stranger who fell yesterday evening from the rock of St. Felix, and who they say lies mortally wounded at the Mas de Sardan. He's a Lowlander, I'm

told, and he must have a hard head if he escape such a tumble."

Again they were silent, till the tolling of a distant bell flinging its dull sound upon the air, gave notice that a fellow mortal had passed the vail which separates the seen from the unseen world, and time from eternity. Straggling groups appeared, returning silently down the pathway, and the dark clouds overshadowing the moon's bright surface, threw a gloom around every object, which induced Madame Durand to return slowly home, followed by the unconscious Maniac. They had scarcely reached the edge of the wood, when the approach of footsteps excited their attention, and their landlord, who had ran to meet them, informed Madame Durand, that two strangers had arrived at the house during her absence, and expressed great anxiety to speak

with her. This intelligence caused the whole party to quicken their steps, and Rose, engrossed with one object, improbable as the expectation was, already anticipated a meeting with Isidore. On their arrival at home, she entered with Madame Durand into the little parlour occupied by the strangers, and by one glance, perceived that they were indeed such to her. The younger, already known to our readers, as the shepherd Pierre, was leaning his strong muscular form against the open casement, and the passing rays of the moon fell full upon his fine sunburnt features and rude attire. The elder stranger seated at the farther end of the room, resting his thin hands on his trembling knees, was at first scarcely to be discerned in the shade; but his eyes were fixed on Madame Durand as she entered, and it seemed as if

he feared he should not be able to support the feelings which the first sight of her would occasion.

"Yes, it is herself," he exclaimed, raising his hands as in the act of blessing, "it is the same my weary eyes have so long wished to see: she has an old man's blessing, and the Lord will not withhold his from one who seeks it."

"Surely," cried Madame Durand, "I ought to know that voice—I cannot be mistaken; my dear Sir—my old respected and valued friend—can it indeed be you whom I am to welcome?"

"Years and years of anguish especially," said Monsieur Brunel, rising hastily, may have altered my face, but they cannot change my heart, and by that you may still know me. What but your desire could have drawn me from a solitude, from whence I foolishly and madly

declared no human voice should again rouse me. Alas! I have lived almost to forget whose minister I am, and that there is any sorrow in the world but mine that stands in need of comfort and sympathy."

Madame Durand took his hand, and pressing it with affection, said, "You need, I am persuaded, no assurance how deeply I have entered into your trials. We will talk of them; it will ease your heart; I almost condemn myself for obtruding my feelings on one already so weighed down—"

"And to whom else, my dear Madam, would you have gone—who else would you have honoured with a confidence which I claim as my right? I have been sorely tried—the will of the Lord be done! but I came here with the hope of comforting, not of afflicting you. Let

us lay aside a subject, the consideration of which might unfit me for the task—but first, are we alone?"

"We are," replied Madame Durand; "my young friend and I have but one heart, and you need not fear from her indiscretion;" at the same time she glanced her eye at Pierre, who, however, moved not from his attitude of attention.

"That young man," said Monsieur Brunel, understanding her look, "is to be trusted; at least I am assured so by one I have known long, and from whom I received the summons to attend you, and the information respecting the present place of your abode."

"That is strange," said Madame Durand, "I should have imagined few persons were acquainted with it; but before we enter into any explanation, let me offer you some refreshment; at your age,

and coming, I conclude, on foot, you stand in need of food and repose."

Monsieur Brunel smiled, and shook his head. "I am inured to fatigue and hardships, and when the mind is intently occupied, it gains at least a temporary victory over the body; gratify me, therefore, by informing me without delay of every particular relating to your present abode in France; the situation of your brother, my much-loved pupil, and in what manner my feeble services may be of use." He returned to his chair, and Madame Durand seating herself beside him, briefly related the occurrences which had taken place since he had parted from them at Lausanne, the death of the Baroness, and the hopes which had induced her to return after so long an absence to her native land, adding a request that Monsieur Brunel would bear his testimony to the

validity of the marriage, when the important question came to be discussed. The old man listened with deep attention, and when she ceased speaking, paused for some time. At length he said, "Justice, my dear Madam, is all you ask for, and I much fear nothing is to be obtained with so much difficulty. In a moment of caprice, mercy might be granted you, because to be merciful is an attribute of power, and the great care not how they vary its exercise, so it is power that they still possess. But justice is considered as a levelling principle, and few are so truly great as to submit themselves voluntarily to her rules. If she were once to reign, the Protestant would be as free as the Catholic, the peasant as the noble, the poor as the rich. We all know how slowly her dominion advances; some would stop short—others would overleap

the line, and every act that strengthens the sceptre in her hand, finds innumerable opposers. But do not despair; your only hope is not in man; there is a Power who has declared himself the orphan's stay—the refuge of the oppressed. Whatever I can do for you, you may depend upon; I will even walk by your side into the crowded court, and before the busy tribunal, though the sight of man is like a blight to these dim eyes, and his voice seems as the sound that proclaimed my undoing." As he spoke his voice became more animated, but a loud scream that was heard prevented his continuing. "Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the old man, starting up, and trembling with excessive emotion, "Whose is that voice?—am I awake—am I in my reason, or did I hear her shrieks from her place of torment? Scarcely had he time to utter these

words, when he looked down, and the unhappy maniac was at his feet, her arms firmly clasped round his knees, her limbs stretched on the cold stone-floor, her eyes fixed on his, as if her whole soul pleaded for that forgiveness which her parched lips could not move to entreat. Poor Brunel gazed wildly round, his bosom seemed bursting from the violent sobs which checked his utterance, and with one hand he endeavoured to loose her frantic grasps, while with the other he tried to unbutton his coat, but his fingers refused their aid, and again he sank into the chair, his fixed and staring eyes giving cause to apprehend that the shock he had received might be fatal. "My father!" exclaimed the poor creature with the vehemence of despair, "my father! I would not kill you, only speak to your child—only stroke my head as you used to do,

and say God bless you, Louise!" Then in a voice still more agonized, "My father! will no one save my father!"—Pierre, who the moment he had seen her enter, had thrown himself on the ground, and supported her in his arms, now jumped up, and scarcely knowing which way he went, rushed out of the house in search of assistance. Madame Durand, shocked beyond expression, busied herself about the unhappy sufferer; and at length, with the assistance of Rose, loosened his neckcloth, bathed his face and hands in water, and with much effort forced him to swallow a few drops. Louise all the time sat watching these various endeavours with anxious looks, from time to time encouraging them with words of commendation and advice, mingled with frequent bitter accusations against herself, for suffering strangers to wait on her fa-

ther, when she knew he loved no one to come near him but his child. "But hush, ladies; he sleeps now, and when he wakes, you shall hear what he says to me." The violence of the fit they indeed hoped was past, a calm stupor had succeeded the strong and convulsed sobbings, and he breathed with less difficulty. "Father!" again exclaimed Louise more softly. The old man opened his eyes, a cold chill came over him, but the feeling soon subsided; he gazed upon that pallid cheek, which he was wont to see radiant with smiles and beauty—he gazed upon that lack-lustre eye which had ever turned upon him with looks of fond affection—he marked that wasted form, once admired for its grace and fair proportion, and throwing his arms about her neck, he cried out, "The world may cast you off, poor lost one; but I cannot," and burst into tears. Nor was

there a dry eye in the room, but her's who had most cause to weep. The moment of recollection was almost past, and the faint gleam of reason which visited her mind not with her clear and steady ray, but like the meteor's glare, that leaves the darkness more profound, was fast declining.

Louise looked from one to the other, and a short hysteric laugh burst from her lips, as she exclaimed, "What! every one crying when my father is just come back, and I am at home to receive him once more! If it's my dress you think so strange, ladies," she continued, glancing her eye on her tattered gown, "I'll go and change it, for it's not for want of better that I wear this; I have fine ones upstairs, have I not, dear father? There's my pink, and my muslin, and the one that was given me for my wedding, by—"

She uttered a faint scream, instead of finishing the sentence, and it seemed as if the very recollection of the name trembling on her lips had given a pang to her heart.

"I cannot bear this!" exclaimed the agonized father, who knew only that she had left his parental arms and her home, and might have fallen into every degradation of vice and infamy; but was ignorant till now what fatal havoc sorrow had made in his beloved child. "I can bear it no longer; my dear friends, if you would not see me expire at your feet, take away this unhappy creature, till I have sought for strength from Him who alone can bestow it."

Madame Durand in vain endeavoured to raise Louise from her lowly posture; it was impossible to reason with her, and her wayward mind could be guided only

by the fancy of the moment. Happily, Pierre now re-entered the room, accompanied by an honest man, who often employed his skill in prescribing for the villagers. Approaching her as she still lay extended on the ground, he gently raised her by the hand, and with a look of tenderness which accomplished what argument failed to effect, led her into another apartment, and consigning her to the care of a female domestic, returned to join the party assembled in the parlour.

CHAPTER VI.

Je me resouds aisement de n'entrer en effroi de ce qu'un moindre que moi prend avec cette patience, et ne veut croire que la bassesse de l'entendement, puisse plus que la vigueur.

MONTAIGNE.

STRONG minds, though endowed with a greater degree of force to grapple with the misfortunes that they meet with in their way through life, yet from their very strength, suffer more acutely than those of weaker mould, as the death-struggles of the hardy warrior are more violent than those of the sickly infant, who breathes away his life in one faint sigh. The consideration that others shared his disgrace, which so often reconciles men to their in-

famy, afforded no consolation to Monsieur Brunel. No desire of shrinking from suffering led him to arm himself with a selfish stoicism which feels not till the wound be "in the bone and in the flesh." He saw the full extent of his trial, he bared his bosom to the stroke, but he fainted not under it, for it was his Father dealt the blow. A short interval of silent recollection and prayer restored him to some degree of self composure. He reflected that it was a blessing to find his child, even in her present unhappy state, to watch over her with anxiety, and preserve her from those insults which she might meet with from strangers. Whether the years of absence had been spent in vice or in misery, it was not for him to consider; her wretchedness was all that now called for attention. Bareheaded, with eyes and hands cast down, he knelt

before his God; and as his lips moved in accustomed devotion, the tears of resignation streamed down his aged cheeks, and eased the anguish of his soul. On rejoining Madame Durand, he would even have turned from his own sorrows by resuming the subject which had been so fearfully interrupted, but that lady insisted on his seeking a calm and quiet night; the country practitioner recommended bleeding in addition, and with some difficulty he was prevailed on to retire to his room, after calling down a blessing on his unhappy Louise, whom, however, he could not again trust himself to see.

Madame Durand would by no means suffer them to leave the house, and such preparations were made as could best accommodate the whole party. Few among them, however, enjoyed much repose; and before the sun had been long

risen, they were roused by the well-known voice of Simon Chas, loudly demanding to be let in. Rose's first impulse was to run to Madame Durand's room, for his arrival in so unexpected a manner seemed to prognosticate her no good; and from the window they could distinctly overhear the dispute between the maid and Simon, who insisted on admittance, not only on the plea of urgent business, but on that of extreme hunger, which he declared himself incapable of satisfying whilst forced to remain in the open air.

"What can have brought Simon so far from Vallerargues?" was Madame Durand's first question.

Rose was unable to answer it, and waited with extreme impatience for the tidings he might have to convey. It struck her, however, after some time, that

it might be a message from her mother, and improbable as the idea seemed, she quickly prepared to descend and ascertain the truth, when a contest of still more angry voices was heard, and before long, Pierre appeared at the door, where the weary Simon still lingered, and with his brandished cudgel quickly made him retreat. Simon drew back a space, his walking stick held up in both hands, but evidently more willing to carry on a war of words than of good hard blows, while the sturdy Mountaineer, disdaining all reply, kept him at arms' length, and gradually advancing against his adversary, seemed determined to drive him back along the road he had just come. Madame Durand, who was not aware of the cause of their enmity, and was for many reasons unwilling to give Simon any just cause of complaint, now hastened to the

door, and calling to Pierre, begged him not only to desist, but to inform her what reason he could have for treating the poor man so ill.

" The master and man are both alike to me," replied the Shepherd; " I could have no cause of quarrel with such a knave as that, but if he attempts to enter the house where I am, or show himself before those who might not like to see him, I'll send him back to Vallerargues with a token he has been with me, which he shall not forget in a hurry."

" Thanks, friend, for your kindness," replied Simon, now somewhat emboldened by the presence of Madame Durand; " but as I don't desire any intercourse with you, it would be but common civility on your part not to force yourself upon me. And as to comparing me with my master, it's a proof either that you are blind, or that you never saw us together."

Madame Durand, who was sufficiently acquainted with Louise's history to perceive it was the apprehension of Simon's seeing her, which chiefly worked upon the young Shepherd, promised, if peace were restored, to keep him near herself during his stay, and recommended Pierre to watch not only over Louise, but her father, who might be equally pained by such a meeting. She then brought Simon into the parlour, and knowing that his appetite frequently obscured his mental faculties, ordered a substantial breakfast to be set before him; and sending for Rose, they waited quietly till, the calls of hunger being satisfied, he should be able to reply to her questions. Simon sat for some time, scarcely daring to open his mouth in such an august presence: but by degrees the appearance of a cold pie, and the flavour of a bottle of the vin de St. George, overcame his ceremonious

scruples, and they could not refrain from smiling at the hearty good will and dexterity with which he cleared the dishes and emptied the capacious bottle. When the delightful labour was ended, Simon throwing himself back in his chair, with the epicurean stretch of an alderman after a turtle feast, exclaimed,

"Well, it is a fine thing to be rich; if I had my own will, and my pocket full of money, I'd make my breakfast last till my dinner, my dinner till my supper, and that till bed-time. Thank you, Madam, for your feast; I wish you as good a one every day, and as good an appetite to eat it with."

"I am extremely obliged by your kindness," replied Madame Durand; "but if you are really pleased with your reception, you may now show it, by informing me why you left Vallerargues, where you

are generally so much engaged, and what has brought you to my house at this early hour?"

"Indeed, Madam," said Simon, "if you were to calculate exactly from the time of my leaving home, I ought to have been here last night; but it was never thought good for my constitution to travel in the dark, and when I saw the moon rising, I judged it time for me to retire, that is, to speak plainly, to enter a sort of an inn I found on my way, where I was sure of a kind reception—for my money—though I must say—But," he continued, putting on a very dismal look, "the business on which I am come will take me longer to explain; I must even begin, by telling you, that my master is a hard man to deal with—I dare say you know it, Madam, but probably you have never felt it on your shoulders as I have, and the

Saints preserve you from such an experience. Now, my master, as I was going to tell you, has for want of better game, fallen upon young Isidore, the widow Delorme's son—"

"What of Isidore?" exclaimed Rose, with much emotion.

"Nay, Mademoiselle Rose," replied Simon, "don't take the matter so much to heart; I did not mean fallen upon him like a loose wall upon a drunken man, who gives it a push, but, metaphorically speaking, like our Curé, who tells me to turn the right ear to my wife because she has just given me a good box on the left. Metaphorically speaking then, he has fallen on him, tooth and nail; and knowing that idleness is the ruin of youth, and doubtless thinking it a pity the king and country should be cheated of such a good-looking fellow as he would be in regimen-

tals, has promoted him to the rank and file of some regiment not yet fixed on, I believe. His men are already after him, their scent is as good as a hound after a wild boar; they've tracked him, I conclude, by this time, and then there can be little to do but bind him and carry him off."

"What is it you mean?" said Madame Durand eagerly. "Surely the Consul dare not employ force!"

"That's what he never does, except when he can't help it," answered Simon; "it's the fox's skin he ekes out with the lion's, not the lion's with the fox's, as the fable has it."

Madame Durand again desired him to be explicit, and with a few indispensable circumlocutions, he related the circumstance that had just occurred, adding such embellishments as he thought most proper

to awaken their sympathy, and ensure his aim in the commission, which was the obtaining a suitable reward for his kindness in taking so long a journey, simply to convey to them the important intelligence. Poor Rose! how difficult did she find the task to restrain her feelings before a person from whom she so much wished to conceal them? Her fears magnified still more than even Simon's love of the marvellous, and already pictured a separation from Isidore as absolutely certain; the dangers, the fatigues of war presented themselves instantly to her mind, and it was not how many returned victorious from the battle, but how many fell, though covered ith glory, that occupied her thoughts. So great was her emotion, that for a considerable time she was unable to speak, and a look of supplicating distress alone imparted her feel-

ings to Madame Durand. This lady was herself scarcely less shocked at the blow that would be given to the prospects of her young favourite, than at the meanness of Vidal, in thus venting his rage. She had too much reason to know the man, to hope much from her interference, but determined that nothing on her part should be left undone, as soon as she could determine how to act for the best. But here the great difficulty lay; an open attempt to thwart the Consul's views was sure to fail, and secret efforts required agents of tried integrity and experience whom, situated as she now was, it was totally out of her power to procure. In this difficulty she felt averse to consult Monsieur Brunel. It seemed cruel at such a moment to bring before him any subject connected with the author of his misfortunes, even if the old man's spirits

were sufficiently composed to permit of his attending to it. At first she resolved to await her return to Vallerargues, which was soon to take place, but a glance at the pale countenance of Rose, proved to her, that no time was to be lost, and as an almost hopeless chance, she inquired of Simon how he thought it would be possible for her to profit by the intelligence he had brought. Simon chuckling with gratified pride, at thus having his advice asked, for the first time in his life, answered with a caution which often helps out ignorance in cases of even greater importance, that it was a difficult question, and required much consideration.

"But unfortunately," said Madame Durand, "you say that time presses; whatever is done must be done immediately."

"Doubtless, Madame, that was my opinion, and is my opinion still," said

Simon, "but when I told you of the difficulty, I did not promise to show the way out of it; if you will know what I think best to be done, I must say, there is but one man to whom you can apply upon this occasion, and that is Father Bernardine, the Pilgrim: people of small judgment would not depend much upon his help, because of his poverty and mean exterior, but rely upon it, he is more than he looks to be; he is very good friends with my lord, the Prior of St. Roc, who is always extremely thick with the Intendant, who is, you know, king in the province. All the world is not let into this secret, but I learnt it when I last went to transact business with my Lord Prior, and you cannot have better information on the subject than mine: the Prior having a pique against my master, will yet more incline him to assist you."

That Simon Chas should, as he called it, transact business with the Prior, one of the proudest men in France, seemed strange to Madame Durand, but making due allowances for his vanity, she concluded he might have gathered his intelligence of the Pilgrim's intimacy at the Priory from some of the domestics, when sent there on messages by his master, and determined, in despair of other assistance, to profit by this hint. But where to find in such a sudden emergency, a man, whose wandering mode of life seldom left any trace of his route, was the next difficulty. Here Simon was as much at a loss as herself; he had never seen him since they journeyed together, and separated in a manner which he thought it most prudent, and most to his honour not to mention at present. Rose suggested the possibility of Pierre being useful on

this occasion, as they had learnt from Monsieur Brunel, that it was Father Bernardine had despatched him for him, and she was immediately hastening to summon him; but Simon stopped her, by begging leave first to retire, declaring himself not the least better inclined than before breakfast to encounter the huge club of the young giant. Madame Durand, who had in a manner become surety for his safety, could not refuse so reasonable a request, and amply recompensing him for his trouble and services, dismissed him with repeated cautions, to conceal from every one his visit to St. Florent, which Simon, for his own sake, faithfully promised, and withdrew, bowing down to the very ground, and quieting his conscience on the score of this extra remuneration, by the consideration that, as he had pleased both parties by his journey,

it was but fitting that both should pay for it.

Pierre was then immediately sent for, and Madame Durand, unwilling to commit the subject of their uneasiness to paper, briefly mentioned the injustice that was threatened to Isidore; and inquiring of the young man if he was acquainted with Father Bernardine's present place of abode, entreated he would proceed to him without delay, and request him, by the interest he expressed in Isidore's welfare, to adopt immediately whatever measures he should judge best, in order to secure his exemption from the service; at the same time desiring he would return to St. Florent, in case her co-operation should be in any wise necessary.

"But how," she added, "can you be sure of finding Father Bernardine, since

you say he did not promise to await your return?"

Pierre smiled, and replied, "As the steel the loadstone that attracts it, wherever he moves, lady, my thoughts follow him, and from this spot I will go to him straight as the stone from the hand of a slinger flies to its mark. Should I have anything to communicate, you may expect me back; in the mean time, I commend poor Louise to your care—let her not miss me, let her not be under apprehension respecting me."

He left the room hastily, and Rose followed, for timidity could no longer restrain her, when all her hopes of happiness were at stake. When she had last parted from Isidore, he had given her a small golden locket, within which was engraved a coronet, and at the same time

informed her, he had received it when a child from Father Bernardine, who had promised him, that should he ever stand in need of his assistance, by sending that token he might command his utmost aid: Isidore, in the thoughtlessness of youth, considering rather his own force than the dangers that might try it, looked upon the promise with indifference, and gave the locket to Rose, as a pretty bauble. But woman's love is always credulous, and she now held the talisman in her hand, fully confident that it would command whatever power its mysterious donor possessed of being useful. Still she hesitated to speak; when Pierre, who had just crossed the threshold, turned as he heard her light footstep following him. He remarked the confusion evident on her countenance, and in a voice unusually gentle, said, " And can I serve you, Ma-

demoiselle? You may depend upon me, for I shall never forget the tear of compassion you shed last night; try me by my actions, for my words cannot express what I feel towards you."

Rose, blushing still more deeply, placed the locket in his hand, and faintly whispered, "Give it yourself to Father Bernardine, and remind him of his promise to protect him who received it as a pledge of his care."

She looked up to see if her words were understood, and the tears which filled her dark blue eyes enforced them more eloquently than the powers of oratory could have done.

"I see how it is, lady," he replied, pressing her hand respectfully to his lips; "I too can feel and suffer, for the heart is not always rude as the speech. You may depend on my zeal and my expedi-

tion; do not be ashamed, for he is worthy of your love, and that is saying much."

He instantly left her, and disappeared like an arrow down the deep glade through which ran the road to the low lands. Rose, watching his tall and manly form till it was lost among the overreaching trees, uttered a prayer for the success of his mission, and re-entered the cottage.

During this time, Father Bernardine, suffering equally in body and mind, remained a forced prisoner at the little hamlet of Millac. Several weeks elapsed before he could be removed even from his bed, and no inconsiderable fears of his recovery were entertained by the village sages and nurses: the extreme restlessness of his temper increased his disorder; nor could Isidore account by any cause, but that of slight insanity, for such an impatience under confinement,

when there seemed no sufficient motive for action. An elderly stranger had visited the Pilgrim in his illness, and remained alone with him for some hours; the result of their conference was never known, but it appeared still more to increase the Father's irritability and desire to depart, and force was almost requisite to detain him till he could travel with safety. At length, however, health gradually returned, and he claimed Isidore's promise of accompanying him. This he could not now refuse without self-reproach, though ignorant of their destination and aim, and more than ever desirous of a separation. Indeed, though by nature little inclined to superstition, the forebodings of his mind at the thoughts of this journey might almost deserve that epithet. He felt none of that inward satisfaction which generally accompanies

the performance of a right action, and it even seemed as if his compliance was rather an unworthy weakness than the effect of self-devotion. In this state of feelings he left Millac, and soon perceived that the road they pursued was different from that which would have led to Vallerargues, and one with which he was entirely unacquainted. Nor was its weariness relieved either by the charms of conversation or the pleasure of agreeable reflections. The sole idea that occupied Isidore's mind was, that every step led him farther from the spot where he most desired to be, and it seemed as though the space they travelled, and the hours they passed, were immeasurable; nor was the silence of his companion uninterrupted but by complaints and exclamations, which had evidently more connexion with what was passing in his own

mind than with the scenes they traversed. The tract of country over which they travelled, lay between two chains of hills, in the diocesses of Alais and Vizes, which are watered by the Gardon; a continued range of low mountains, covered with chestnut-trees, bounded the view, and their rich foliage, no longer enlivened by its gay blossoms, formed a deep and impenetrable shade. At some distance, the lofty summits of Aigoal and L'Espirou towered above the rest, attracting the soft clouds which often fell in showers upon the valleys beneath, and fed the numerous streams, which, issuing from their rocky caverns, increased the waters of the Gardon. One part of this district has received the name of Host Dion, or garden of God; so fondly does man associate with every scene of more than usual beauty, the idea of the Eden from which

he has been banished. It is watered by a thousand rills that glitter in the sun, and the variety and fragrance of the daffodils, violets, tulips, jonquils, narcissus, jasmine, and other flowers that embalm the air, equal, if not exceed those in that field

> Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
> Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
> Was gathered.

At the period of which I speak, this country had not yet recovered from the fatal effects of civil war, and as the Pilgrim seemed desirous of avoiding the inhabited parts, they generally found shelter for the night in some lone cottage, whose proprietor preferred the vicinity of his vineyard or corn-field to the more sociable, yet distant abode of the village. Their entertainment was poor, but offered with cheerful kindness, and seldom were the

hours of noon-day or evening repose passed without a trifling circumstance referring to former times, drawing from the grey-headed sire or talkative dame, some anecdotes of their youth connected with that eventful period, and which served as a comment on many a spot they visited. Amongst other places that lay on the road our travellers took, and which had thus been rendered famous by the struggle of the Protestants, was the Mas de Cauvi, on the borders of the meadows of Alais, remarkable in the annals of the Camisards, for the combat which the intrepid Cavalier, bold in a good cause, and his devoted, though undisciplined troops, sustained against the well-armed Burgesses and gallant Nobles, who, under the Chevalier de Guines, burned to encounter an enemy they despised, but from whom those fled who could escape the avenging

sword. Not far distant was the Devois de Martignargeres, where the same chief defeated an army of marines and dragoons, under the command of Vonquieres. Crouching on the ground, they seemed to present an easy prey to the foe; but no sooner did the royalists advance in a furious charge, than the little Camisard band rose as by one impulse, and the hymn of devotion sounding along their line, they rushed to battle and to victory. Dear to the heart is the spot where our forefathers have bled in the cause of liberty! To the careless eye of the stranger, the grass waves as mournfully, and the rocks rise as bleak as those around; but every object near it speaks to the heart, that can say it was here they fell who have transmitted to me the freedom they fought for, and from whom I inherit the ardour which led them to triumph over danger and difficulty.

CHAPTER VII.

While from yon blue hills,
Dim in the clouds, the radiant aqueducts
Turn their innumerable arches o'er
The spacious desert, brightening in the sun,
Proud and more proud in their august approach.
Ruins of Rome.

After a journey thus slowly performed of several days, the scenery became by degrees wilder, and their way drew nearer to the banks of the winding Gardon, which rolled its clear blue tide over a stony bed, worn smooth by incessant friction, while its waters were dark from the deep overhanging shadows of the rocks that bordered it. Father Bernardine, who seemed perfectly acquainted with the road, informed his companion, that he felt himself

so much recovered, he would not require his attendance further, as the following day he was to attend a meeting with some friends on urgent business. He added his advice for his immediately repairing to the place where his flocks were still feeding on the mountains, and a request that he would return in the course of a few days to meet him at Vallerargues, which was the last tax he should impose on his submission. Isidore could not but feel some pleasure at being at length released, and made no great difficulty of the promise exacted, as he had no doubt Madame Durand and Rose must, by this time, have returned home, and his impatience could brook an absence from them no longer than absolute necessity required. It was, therefore, with more alacrity than he had of late felt, that he fixed the time of meeting for that day week, and re-

newed his offers of service, now that he knew they would not be accepted.

Evening was drawing on, while they completed these arrangements, and as they proceeded, the hollow murmur of a distant water-fall became distinctly heard. A few scattered stars were gradually appearing in the dark blue of the unclouded firmament, and along the western horizon the faint crimson glow announced that the beams of day had not long departed. In this soft light—this hour when all is hushed and still as an infant's sleep, Isidore for the first time approached the Pont du Gard with the admiration of unsatiated enthusiasm. A triple row of arches sprung in majestic, yet fair proportion, stretching with giant span from one huge mass of rock to the other, and filling up the valley through which ran the river, now dwindled by the summer heats to a

small stream. Ages had rolled their silent course over this changeful globe, since first this mighty structure rose in the solitary waste. The wildness of the scenery around, so calculated to strike the mind with awe; the absence of every other trace of human grandeur; the gloom that overshadowed the scene, suited well with the sublimity of the pile. It scarcely seems the effort of mortal strength, and the imagination might almost conceive some potent spirit soaring in mid air, and by his voice commanding it into being, to mock the puny attempts of man. But wondrous as it appears, it was achieved by the genius and perseverance of Rome, as a lasting monument of her fame, proclaiming the majesty of days gone by, and challenging the admiration of succeeding generations to its imperishable greatness. Who can behold this stately fabric, and

not feel his heart beat high with rapture; who can examine its firm construction, its massy stones and strong-connecting links, and not confess how like a breath is the life of man, when compared with what his genius plans, and his hand executes.

It was not without much difficulty that Father Bernardine withdrew Isidore from a spot that rivetted his whole soul, but the approach of night made it necessary to search for some shelter, which in such a place it was not easy to find, as the country was thinly peopled, and only by a few of the lowest order of peasants. Isidore, as the most alert, climbed to the summit of the rocks, and at length discovered at a distance a glimmering light, to which they immediately made their way. It proceeded from the window of a baraque, an inferior kind of inn, in which

several lamps diffused their cheerful rays, while peals of merriment reaching the ear at a considerable distance, and scraps of low popular songs, gave notice what description of guests were revelling within. Both paused at the threshold of the house; the Pilgrim was at best little inclined to mirth, and the feelings to which the lovely scene he had been gazing upon gave rise, even more than usually disgusted Isidore at the thoughts of such associates. He would gladly have awaited the return of day, wrapt in his cloak on a bed of lavender and other aromatic herbs that everywhere yielded their rich perfume as they were trodden under the foot of the traveller; his eye watching the stupendous shadows of the aqueduct, and his thoughts flying far away to her who was associated with every pleasure; but Father Bernardine's recent recovery from so severe an

illness, forced him, though reluctantly, to give up this wish, and he knocked loudly at the door. A sudden silence ensued, followed by the barking of a little cur dog, and the authoritative voice of the master, inquiring who demanded admittance with such an air of command. Isidore made him understand their want of food and shelter, and relapsing again into the obsequious landlord, he opened the door, and ushered them into the common room adjoining the kitchen, where all travellers of every description were wont to assemble. The landlord, a portly, quick-eyed, obsequious publican, conducted his new guests to the place of honour, a seat near the huge chimney, which was now gaily decorated with boughs of the gum listus. He remarked under the simplicity of Isidore's dress an air of superiority to which he naturally yielded respect, and

his habitual reverence for the ministers of his religion procured for the Pilgrim the same attention. But, in order to effect this arrangement, two men had been removed from their places, and with looks of displeasure at the intrusion, they sauntered to the lower end of the room, and stood for some time in eager conversation with the other guests, while around the several tables all heads were drawn close together, and whispers circulated, which, from the glances stolen from time to time at the Pilgrim and Isidore, seemed to have their arrival for their subject. Nor was the former backward to scrutinize in his turn. He stood up, and according to his usual custom, leaning his face on his staff, seemed to study every countenance before he decided what course of behaviour to adopt. It was a motley group presented itself to his view. In the kitchen, the

door to which was open, and where, over a fire that glanced its light upon the sooty rafters, the toiling and broiling chef de cuisine was preparing a repast for these new comers, sat a party of carmen and voiturins, dressed in dark blue blodes, with coloured handkerchiefs round their hats, each enlivening his bottle of wine with recitals of his own feats and those of his horses; hair-breadth escapes, impassable roads, and unjust duties. Near them the inn-maid was encouraging by her half-suppressed titter and faint repulses the obstreporous gallantry of the hostler, and a German jockey, who had brought a string of horses from Nuremberg to a neighbouring fair. In the apartment to which they had been introduced, a retail dealer in earthenware and glass sat smoking, dozing, and sipping Annisette, while his jolly wife lent an attentive

ear at once to the civil speeches of a pedlar, who was so situated as to be partly concealed behind her chair, and the railings of a half frantic quack doctor, who having at the same fair, fleeced a tolerably large sum from the pockets of the credulous multitude, had had his own lightened of it the preceding evening by a stout pedestrian as he crossed a solitary pass in the hills, for the neighbourhood did not at that moment enjoy a very honourable reputation. His merry-andrew, wearied with exciting peals of laughter, and shaking the sides even of old age by his mirthful antics, lay extended with open mouth in an arm-chair in one corner of the room, and in another a Spanish Jew was reckoning his gains on his fingers, and most fervently cursing the Christian race for having infringed upon his brethren's monopoly for cheating. Apart

from the rest, the two men already mentioned had placed themselves near a table by the wall, where a lamp, suspended under an image of the Virgin, threw its light full on their faces. They appeared to have been in the army, at least the eldest, who was far advanced in years, still wore the tattered garb of military service, and one empty sleeve, which hung useless by his side, sufficiently showed what that service had gained him. His countenance was dark and morose, set off with hanging grey eye-brows, and a huge pair of mustachios which were shagged and untrimmed; his eye was cruel, and his whole look indicated that he had borne arms, less to defend his own and his country's rights, than to oppress those of others. His companion, somewhat younger, was not more prepossessing in his appearance, and a crafty turn of

expression was far from prepossessing strangers in his favour.

It was upon this assemblage that the Pilgrim cast his inquiring glance; his lips were compressed and his head erect, yet a slight convulsive motion of his frame showed he was not perfectly pleased with the survey. He, however, seated himself in silence, as the supper was now placed before him; and the company, after some vain attempts to draw Isidore into conversation, continued their gossip as before. The two soldiers had ceased their whispers, and they appeared as if returning to the same topic which the entrance of our travellers had interrupted, for the elder exclaimed, with an oath, "You're right, comrade, there never was a prettier piece of work than these 'enlèvemens,' as we called them—carrying all the suspected from their houses, and fixing them

in places of safety. If you had but seen how we marched 'em! a flock of sheep going to market is nothing to their docility. We used to begin by burning all the ovens, mills, and farm-houses, that the rebels might be slack of provisions; then we seized all the trades that might be useful to them, such as locksmiths, blacksmiths, surgeons, shoemakers, and what not; step by step, you see, till we thought the remainder would be lonely without them, and men, women, and children were carried off too. All the places liable to the infection of heresy, as we called it, were cleared; if you had but seen them helter skelter along the roads, and we in the rear, sword in hand, spur on heel, they had not much time to turn round and lament. Why hundreds, nay thousands, were taken the same good care of, all for their benefit though, to keep them, as I

said, from the contagion of rebellion, which is more catching than the plague, and a hundred times worse when caught. We one day, at this same work, made a glorious capture, and to my share there fell a damsel six feet ten inches high—they called her la Grande Marie—she was one of their prophetesses forsooth, and night nor day the woman was not still, till I taught her silence, as I had done my wife before: I'll give you the secret how it's done some day."

"The plan of the enlèvemens was a thought of Marshal Julian's, was it not?" said his companion.

"Yes," replied the other, "and a fine one too, but not his best; Julian was a man for doing things on the wholesale; he wanted to have, not a few hundred villages, but the whole range of the Cevennes mountains purified by fire and sword,

leaving not a Protestant alive there to tell the tale; that, he said, is the only way to clear the country; a pretty effectual way, to be sure, but some one prevented it."

"You served under Julian?" said his companion, replenishing his pipe from a tobacco-box which was handed him. "That must have been glorious sport."

"Why yes it was," replied the other; "but I had two strings to my bow. Julian was as stout a heart as you would meet with: once a heretic, I'm told; but if he was, he washed the stain clean out in heretic blood before he died. He would rap out an oath as freely as the veriest trooper in the land, and then came the sign of the cross to make up for it. It's wonderful how he took with the fanatic old Priests and Curés: he was their Gideon, their Samson, their guardian angel; but if all angels are like him,

Paradise must be an uproarious sort of a place. When he was not in action," continued the soldier, after a pause, " I set up on my own account; I was a Cadet de la Croix,—you know what mettle they were of."

" Why," said the other, bursting into a loud laugh, " I can make a pretty shrewd guess, since I have had the honour of knowing you so long."

" And you'd not be far out, I can tell you," said the other. " We were a little wild sometimes, but staunch as blood-hounds when after the prey—a little given to desire our neighbour's goods, and to ease his conscience by removing from him the temptation of this wicked world's wealth. We took our name from the glorious crusade we were engaged in against the heretic Camisards. It was our chief, Brother Francis himself, who put the

white cross on my breast. Those Fathers are terrible fellows, when they once take the sword in hand, are they not, old grey-beard?" addressing himself to the Pilgrim, who affected to be too much engaged in eating to listen to him; then winking to his companion, the ruffian continued, "If the old gentleman don't know it, I do. I thought myself the very devil incarnate; but I was gentleness itself, when compared with Brother Francis and his favourite, Florimont. He had spent some years in a desert near Sommieres, watching and fasting, and nursing his vengeance, like a wild bull that is kept up to make it the more fierce; and when he did come out, lean and haggard, his black hair and beard almost covering his face, and a coarse sheet tied round his body, you would have thought it was Death himself who was to be our captain. A

party of fool-hardy Camisards had burnt the old man's hermitage: they had better have burnt the place where the witches hold their Sabbath, for small peace had they after that feat. We had two other leaders, Lefebvre and Alary; it was a toss up which did the most service in the good cause. Wherever the white cross appeared, you would have thought the plague and famine, as well as the sword, were in its train. Not a man did we spare, not a woman, unless she was pretty or rich. Woe betide the wrinkled, the toothless, the hobbling; there was not an old hag left to scare the crows in all the districts we scoured!"

"And," inquired his companion, "did no one put a stop to your doings?"

"Yes," said the Soldier, "some who envied us, and a few of your over-righteous

squeamish poltrons; but we soon silenced them, and when we had the clergy to plead for us, who had a right to wag his irreverent tongue? If you had but seen, too, when the poor wretches we caught were treated with a little of their tortures, how they sang like so many swans, how the people shouted, and the Monks, trying to conceal their delight, stood round, telling their beads and mumbling Paternosters over the heretics—I wonder if such times will ever come again?"

"Why, as to that," said the Quack Doctor, "I should not wonder if they did. I hear magistrates are on the alert, and I am sure they're always ready."

"Yes," replied the other, in a louder tone, "I know the silly fools have a hankering after some of their old fare; I have my eye on them;" and he looked round

for a moment to where Isidore and the Pilgrim were seated,—"they will hear of me, who little think of it."

"But how," said the younger soldier, "came you to lose your arm? I have heard some of the particulars, but never the whole story."

"You shall not have that to say again," replied his companion. "But, landlord, first another bottle of wine, that I may drink to the memory of the limb I have lost, as I would lose every other without wincing."

The landlord, who had overheard the conversation from the kitchen, where he was superintending his domestic concerns, now bustled up with a large flagon of his best liquor, and as he set it down on the table, whispered something in the old soldier's ear, which, to judge from the

effect on his countenance, did not exactly suit with his humour.

"Caution! you blockhead," he exclaimed, "you talk of caution to me! why, if the whole race of heretics were before me this moment, I'd tell them what I think of them, and I wonder who'd dare stop me. So, if that chap in the corner," he continued, striking his fist on the table, "does not approve of my opinions, he may either walk off, or run the risk of having his ears cut off, if they object to what they hear."

Isidore, conscious this insult was intended for him, sprung from his chair, and was endeavouring to make his way through, in order to resent it; but Father Bernardine perceiving his intention, seized hold of him, and almost by force compelled him to be again seated; indeed, he him-

self shrunk from an alehouse quarrel with such an opponent, already more than half overpowered by the wine he had drank in profusion; the bully, therefore, looked round in triumph, and the prudent landlord slunk back to his appropriate occupations, dreading nothing so much as disputes, in which he was sure to suffer in his moveables, if not in his person.

"But now for my arm," resumed the old soldier, emptying another bumper; "it was, let me see, some thirty or forty years ago: can you remember so long, father?" again, turning to the Pilgrim—"I had information of a number of Camisards who intended to hold a prayer meeting; I think it was called at the mill of Colognac, no matter now where that is—I set off with a few of our choicest spirits. The night was dark as a funeral pall, and if we could have trembled, we should have

done so then, for there is no knowing what is abroad at such a time. However, soft, soft we went on, and could plainly hear their voices as they yelled forth their hymns with a noise that would have stunned you. Each had his sword by his side, pistol in belt, and gun ready cocked in hand, when suddenly the singing ceased. We began to swear as loud as we durst, fearing the prey had escaped, and sure enough it had; when we reached the mill, there was nothing to be heard but the wheel going click clack, click clack, and an old beldam lullabying her grandchild. 'Hell and furies,' I exclaimed, 'did these fools sink into the earth, or fly off like the witches upon a broomstick!' With one blow I burst open the door, and those within began to huddle together with fear. There was a crowd of them; an old man, just ready for the grave, he could not wish

to live longer, his wife, some five or six daughters, young boys, an infant in the cradle, some for every taste, and I had a taste for all. We asked how the meeting had broken up so suddenly? the pretty innocents stared; they could not understand us; not a soul had been near them that night. Just by way of jogging their memory, a quick-handed cadet gave one of the women a prick with his bayonet; she set up a shriek, all joined her, so there was but one way to silence the hubbub. The old man fell first; when once we had drawn blood, there was no stopping. The old woman clung round me to save her youngest babe, who laughed as my sword glittered in its eyes; perhaps I might, but in giving her a kick, to loose myself from her hold, she stumbled, and I believe never spoke again. All was the work of a moment; in turning to

see how my companions sped, a heavy blow fell upon my left arm; I looked about, and by a secret door, concealed by a quantity of brushwood, came sallying forth the troop we expected to meet less prepared for us. It was then no time for mercy; swords clashed—shots were fired—the dead and the dying fell together, and I fell too, from loss of blood. The room seemed to swim before my eyes, and suffocating with the smoke and the pressure, I remember no more, but the face of the man who thought he had given me a death stroke, and that I shall never forget. When I came to myself, I shook off the bodies that weighed me down; there were only a few of our's, and they looked fierce even in death; I cannot say I liked their company so much as when they were alive. The women and children, too, were strangely pale, and

covered with blood and wounds; I could almost have fancied they turned their eyes reproachfully upon me, for it was morning, and every thing was clearly seen: one fair lass, with long flaxen hair fallen from under her cap."—A deep and hollow groan, which seemed to ascend as from the bosom of the earth, here made the speaker start. All present had gradually become so attentive to his tale of horror, that a dead silence reigned throughout the room, and yet no one knew from whence it came. The soldier looked around, his teeth chattered, and his face grew ghastly pale. "By Saint Barnaby, that was very like the moan she made, for I was going to say I found a spark of life in her, and the——but its better, perhaps, to say no more about the matter; there may be some squeamish souls here who are afraid of hearing about wounds

and bloodshed, yet I can't forget the day if I would, for I was forced to have my arm cut off, and I have done little good service since."

As soon as the feeling of terror subsided, many remarks were made by the hearers in a low voice; but Isidore, disgusted and shocked at all he heard, and perceiving the Pilgrim had withdrawn from his side, took the first opportunity of leaving the house, to wander amidst those scenes of nature which formed so delightful a contrast with the polluted haunts of man. The wind had risen, but soft and gentle as the breath of love; it drove the white clouds along the sky without darkening the face of the moon, that sailing along in the deep azure reflected her image in the trembling stream, and whose light, flung in broad lines upon the rocks and massy arches of the aqueduct,

deepened their dark shadows on the ground. It was a moment for reflection and silent enjoyment. "Strange," thought Isidore, as he paced to and fro upon a small level of fine sand on the river's edge, and listened to the rippling of the water, "that man who is formed for noble purposes should delight to defile this fair world by his passions and his rage; still more strange, that religion, which is meant as a light to purify every heart, should so often prove the fatal torch of discord. Are we not the children of one common parent? Is not that lovely sky a canopy for all? Does not the same sun shed warmth and comfort alike on all? and we seek, for a difference of opinion which our Heavenly Father tolerates, to exterminate each other from the possession of a few yards of the earth's surface. How is his image effaced from our souls, by which we

should recognise one common kindred? Is there not enough of woe in the world without calling for those thunders which his mercy suffers to sleep? No, it is clear that a persecuting religion can never be the true one, since how can we have a right to exclude any from the number of our brethren, when the orthodox Jew was commanded to acknowledge as such even the poor ignorant outcast Samaritan." In such thoughts the moments passed rapidly, and in such a night a lover must find it impossible to tear himself from the sweet sounds, the gentle airs, and fragrant odours that floated around. Isidore's meditations involuntarily turning from general misery to individual happiness, the Pont du Gard was soon lost to his sight, and nothing appeared in view but the softly waving woods and verdant meadows of St. Florent, while the moon seemed to

cast her light full on an open casement, whence issued the perfume of the jessamine and the tuberose, and a lovely girl watching its silent progress, appeared as if breathing a prayer for him who was far away.

The clock in the Baraque struck two, before the young enthusiast could persuade himself to return under its humble roof. A deep silence had succeeded to the late clamorous scene; all had retired to rest, even the Pilgrim, from whom he was to part the following morning, and who had declared his intention of pursuing his journey, at an early hour, towards the opposite side of the Rhone. Despairing of finding his apartment that night, without disturbing the whole household, Isidore prepared for his repose. By the light of the lamp which had been left burning against his return, and which

was already wavering in its socket, he could perceive, that a kind of settle bed had been made up for him in one corner of the room, and wrapping his cloak around him, he soon fell into a profound sleep, from which he did not awake before late the next morning, when a loud and strange clamour of voices made him start from his repose.

CHAPTER VIII.

And in his breast,
With mortal stroke, he drove th' avenging steel
Hilt deep. Then, as the thirsty sand drank in
The expiring miscreant's blood, he looked around
In sudden apprehension.

RODERIC.

ON leaping from his bed, Isidore perceived a crowd passing before the window, and entered the baraque, were in the confusion of sounds he could distinguish several of his companions of the preceding evening, joined by the hoarse voices of ome of the peasantry, who seemed eager to make themselves acquainted with the affair in agitation. The crowd turned naturally into the common room, and he

then first remarked that two of them carried something under the weight of which their steps seemed to bend, and which they laid upon a large table in the centre of the apartment. Curiosity tempted Isidore to draw near and lift up the horseman's cloak with which it was covered, but he as quickly turned away in horror on perceiving it to be the body of the old soldier, whose dreadful language and insolent behaviour had so much disgusted him the night before, stiff in death, and the cloak, which some friendly hand had thrown over him, wet with the blood which flowed from a deep wound in his side. His face was swollen and black ; his eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and his own neck handkerchief, twisted like a rope, had apparently been used as one means to assist in his destruction. Still, even in death, there was the same vin-

dictive look, the same air of unsubdued courage that had distinguished the hardened villain to the last hour of his existence; and Isidore, unused to scenes of murder, and heart-sick at the recollection how quickly he, who had never shown mercy, was thus called upon to answer before his Judge, turned from the spectacle, and drawing his hat over his eyes, remained apart from the rest, scarcely conscious of the discourse that was carrying on around him. Not so the crowd; each had something to say, without being able to find listeners—each had an opinion to give, a conjecture to offer, and pressed eagerly forward against those who were more advantageously situated, receiving a strange delight in contemplating a sight that thrilled their blood with involuntary horror. The man who had first discovered the murder was a

labourer, who, driving his plough early to his land, had, in the obscurity of twilight, nearly passed over the corpse, for such it even then was. He had alarmed his nearest neighbours, and next, after a fruitless search for the villain who had perpetrated the deed, the travellers issuing from the baraque; but as hitherto no clue for the discovery had been found, they had brought the body there, and the countrymen, eager for the apprehension of the murderer, from a conviction that some suspicion must rest on them till he should be found, had despatched one of their number for the Consul of the next village. The landlord in the mean time, assuming a degree of consequence which the occasion seemed to warrant, began to examine those who, having spent the evening in company with the deceased, were the more likely to be able to throw

some light on this horrid and mysterious affair. It was not without great difficulty that he enforced silence, nor would he at length have succeeded, had not the curiosity of the crowd come to his assistance. Many remembered the unhappy man having left the room before they retired to rest; one had accompanied him to the door, and on inquiring why he quitted such pleasant company for a solitary journey, received for answer, that a commission which he had well nigh forgotten, obliged him to go to the next village, but that he cared not to mention it before the landlord, who would hardly let him get off so easily. His comrade, he said, would pay the reckoning, and notwithstanding his remonstrances, he had wished him good night, and soon disappeared along the winding pathway. On interrogating his companion, this circumstance was cor-

roborated, although he declared himself ignorant of the nature of his business, farther than that it was some state affair that would admit of no delay. The landlord then remarked that the Pilgrim was missing, but the pedlar replied, that having slept in the same room, he had seen him depart much later, and as he believed, in a contrary direction; for he had professed an intention of paying his devotions at the cross of St. Boniface before he commenced his journey. "Who then can have done the deed!" exclaimed the important landlord; "that a murder has been committed no one will deny, for a *felo de se* is never perpetrated with such appearances as those before you, since it would be difficult for a man to inflict such a wound, or to strangle himself in such a manner; but, gentlemen, as it is not likely that the murderer will declare himself; for

if he had such an intention, we have given him ample time to do so, it remains with us by our sagacity to discover him and bring him to justice; and I must say, he who does this will have no cause to complain of his want of sense to the end of his life." And as he spoke, he turned suddenly to Isidore, who, silent and horror-struck, took no share in the scene that was going forward. This simple action was sufficient to excite the attention of every one present. "He's conscience-smitten," whispered one to his fellow. "Poor young man," ejaculated another; "it's clear they must have met after he flew out of the house in such a fury." "Ay," continued a third, "I know him to be a Protestant, for he ate meat though it was Friday; those heretics are touchy enough when any thing is said against their sect, and he had hard words to swal-

low last night, I must say." Thus the suspicion went round, increasing in strength as each confirmed it by his opinion. Feeling himself painfully the gazing-stock of every eye, the confusion on Isidore's countenance naturally increased. It was in vain for him to reply with the simplicity of truth to the various interrogations that were poured in from every quarter; he stood like a stag at bay receiving the darts that were thus wantonly thrown against him: so perfectly convinced was the sapient landlord at last of his guilt, and his own penetration, as he denominated the look he had chanced to give, that he winked to his ostler to seize the culprit. But Isidore, roused by the sudden attack, with one blow sent him reeling to the other end of the room; a second opponent shared the same fate, and a third, advancing, would have followed

his companions, had not the whole party, exclaiming that he was resisting justice, rushed upon him, and at length got him on the ground, holding him down with knees and arms, till a strong rope was brought, and being tied round his wrists, deprived him of all power of opposition. The alert pedlar had insisted on being the person to fix it, and taking his opportunity while he bent over him under pretence of straining the cord, slipped a small knife into the pocket of his waistcoat, at the same time saying in a scarcely audible whisper, "Use it, and escape if you are innocent; you know you have no cause for fear."

"If," repeated Isidore, in a voice louder than prudence warranted.

"Be silent, for an ass as you are," replied the pedlar in the same low tone,

"I know the truth better than you do, and I will take steps in your favour."

The knots were fastened, and the pedlar rose without leaving him time to reply, and Isidore could not think of making this strange communication public, which might be so easily denied, or would probably involve in difficulty a person who, at least, seemed to feel some interest in his fate. Nor did he purpose, by availing himself of his hint, to add to the appearances already so strong against him, a precipitate flight from proper examination. Still the voice of sympathy was solacing, though it was evidently a solitary voice, for his struggles had greatly incensed the crowd against him. "Why he's as strong as a lion," exclaimed one of the peasants, rubbing his leg, which had suffered in the fray. "No won-

der," cried another, " that one-handed old man was not a match for him; I would not meet him myself in a dark night, unless I had a couple of stout fellows to back me." Others were in the mean time disputing what was to be done with the prisoner, whom they had thus secured, and it was at length agreed he should remain where he then was until proper persons could be procured to escort him to a place of greater security. Some were despatched in quest of the officers of justice; the rest pursued their journey, or returned to their daily tasks, or sauntered, curious to know the end of such a terrible adventure, before the front of the baraque, under pretence of acting as guards in case of need, and Isidore was left alone, stretched on the floor, giddy from the violence of his exertions, and smarting from the blows and bruises he had received.

But the state of his body was nothing when compared to that of his mind, on reflecting upon the situation in which he was thus unexpectedly placed. To a spirit of any honour or feeling, the mere circumstance of being thought capable of a murder was at once horrid and degrading; and however innocent he knew himself to be, it was impossible to say what difficulties he might encounter in proving this satisfactorily to others. He was a Protestant, therefore doubly liable to suspicion; the provocations he had received on the preceding evening, and which so many would bear witness to, were such as it would be supposed no one of his persuasion could endure without seeking for revenge, yet would not serve as a sufficient excuse for his taking the law into his own hands.

The fact of his having left the party in

disgust, not very long before the deceased, could be easily proved by those who seemed so eager to come forward against him, and whatever arguments he should urge, would be backed by no friend; unaided and unsupported, he must stand his trial, and support the issue, and he must be more than a hero who shrinks not at the thought of such loneliness in the hour of peril. It was true, Father Bernardine might return, but would the little he could urge be received in his favour, from one, who, in the common actions of life, scarcely appeared to be guided by the dictates of reason? If these reflections were painful, how far deeper was his distress when he thought of his mother, of the moment when she should learn how heavily misfortune pressed on her darling? Isidore could not resolve to hasten this moment, and determined to leave to chance the

manner of her receiving the information: he knew that evil tidings always travel quickly, and he had no alleviation to offer to their bitterness. How different were his thoughts at this moment, from those in which he had indulged the night before, when, real suffering at a distance, he had allowed himself to sink into that pleasing melancholy which is one of the luxuries of the happy. But whether in joy or sorrow, one idea was always predominant. Yes! even the anticipation of his mother's anguish could be borne—the probability of condemnation and disgraceful death, all be supported by manly courage and christian fortitude; but the image of Rose, her heart wrung by every pang he suffered, sinking under his trials, crushed by the same injustice by which he might be cut off, was too much for reason to endure. In a paroxysm of de-

spair he sprang from the ground, strained at his bonds, till the blood almost burst forth from their pressure, and mad with rage, he supplicated, threatened, remonstrated, but in vain. No human ear would listen, and he who, stretched in the sleep of death, lay extended before him, was not again to be roused, till the voice which can wake the dead should command him to arise to that judgment before which all must stand! The cloak had fallen from the body, and there was something in the dreadful spectacle before him, of a nature to check his most violent emotions. As his eye turned involuntarily on the murdered soldier, how dreadful seemed the calm? How appalling the silence of one who had so lately made those walls re-echo to his blasphemy and his violence? In how short a time might his own heart, which now beat so tumultuously, and rose

so proudly against the decree of Providence, be also still? He gazed, till he could almost fancy those lips, which an iron seal had for ever closed, were about to open, and announce the moment when he, too, was to follow along that narrow path which is never retraced, to reveal the secrets of the dark prison-house, and utter a warning such as mortal man, weak and infirm of purpose, sometimes pants to hear, as a testimony to the reality of things unseen. But all was still—no sympathy moved those stern features fixed as in marble—no interest in the fate of others beamed from those glazed and starting eyes; there is neither cunning nor device, neither love nor hatred in the grave, and the dead can teach no lesson, but that of their own nothingness. Softened by these considerations, Isidore fell on his knees, and with a heart, where rebellion still

struggled against submission, prayed fervently to that Being who both sees and pities our weakness, and has promised to give strength sufficient to support every blow. Relieved by this act of devotion, he rose more calm and composed, and desiring to turn his thoughts from the dreadful spectacle before him, approached as near the table as the rope would permit, to throw the cloak once more over the ghastly countenance of the deceased. In so doing, he remarked in a side-pocket, a small piece of paper, which his curiosity led him to open. His surprise was great, on finding it a list, containing the names of several Protestants of respectability, to which his own was added, and at the head of the list was that of Daniel Gui, with which he was totally unacquainted, except from the traditions of the country, that related many wonders of a person of

that name who had fought in the cause of the Camisards. He judged it, however, most prudent to secure this paper, and the probable conjectures to which it gave rise, by procuring some occupation for his thoughts, served to lessen the tedium of the hours, whose slow progress he was compelled to mark by the clock which ticked in the room. No human being broke in upon his solitude, except the slip-shod maid of the inn, who, under pretence of bringing him some refreshment, contrived to gratify her curiosity by the sight of a murderer; no tidings of the Pilgrim reached him, the hope of whose return he would not yet give up, and the silence of so lonely a place, seldom interrupted, but by the crowing of a cock, calling his favourites to a sunny dunghill, or the thoughtless whistle of the ostler as he pursued his customary employments

in the yard, was not calculated to dissipate his gloom. Wearied with care and anxiety, and the fruitlessness of his reflections, he was sinking into that sort of stupor which deadens the sense of pain, only that it may return with more acuteness, when the tread of horses once again aroused him, and by the bustle excited, and the confusion of hurrying to and fro, it was evident some strangers had arrived at the baraque. Tossed between hope and fear, Isidore listened attentively, as the voices grew louder; he could plainly distinguish his own name pronounced, in a voice that was not unknown to him, to which the landlord replied, in a kind of mysterious whisper, that was intended to give weight to what he said. It appeared as if the strangers, whoever they might be, were making inquiries respecting him; but if this state of uncertainty left room

for favourable expectations, it did not last longer than the discussion; for, after a considerable time spent in parleying, the door was unlocked, and the landlord, followed by two soldiers, entered the room.

"There, gentlemen," said the host, "is your prisoner, and right glad am I to remove the scandal of his presence from my house, though, for the public good, I am always ready to undertake any office, however painful. I must now see who is to reimburse me for the expenses of the funeral, and, indeed, for the loss of custom during this day; not a traveller has crossed my threshold, all frightened away by the report of this bloody murder."

Meanwhile, the man advanced—"Jaques," exclaimed Isidore, recognising, in one of them, a person with whom he had been familiar from his childhood, "is it possible you are here?"

"Yes, indeed, master," replied the kind-hearted man, "and sorry I am to have such a task put upon me. Woe is me, what will become of poor Madeline, who is breaking her heart already about you. It was bad news I had to bring you, at least, so I thought it, coming along, for I know well what is your taste; but what I hear now, washes the other clean away like."

"News," said Isidore, eagerly, "what, of my mother?"

"No, no," replied Jaques, "the old woman is well enough in health, and may remain so, till this blow kills her outright; what I mean, is, that I was sent with my comrade here, to take you in the king's name, to serve in his army, for the Consul says you're drawn this year. We went to the place where your flock feeds in the mountains, and there we heard you had

been seen at Millac, and from Millac we traced you here, and were told about the—the—I won't say what. It's one thing to serve the king like a gentleman, and another to march to prison like a malefactor, where, hard as it seems, I must take you to-night."

Isidore listened attentively to this speech; if any thing new could now have moved him, it would have been to see how successful the arts of villany often are, when practised against innocence, and yet he felt, at this moment, that he would not give up the blessing of a clear conscience, to be freed from all the persecutions and difficulties that seemed so thickly to surround him.

"But you cannot think me guilty, surely, Jaques?" said Isidore, remarking how downcast he appeared.

"I think myself as much so," he re-

plied; "but I am thinking all men mayn't be as clear sighted as I am; and it isn't always what is, but what they think is, that's of consequence; however, cheer up, master, it matters not how near we come to the gallows, so as we keep out of the reach of the hangman's arm, and that I trust you will do." Isidore shook him by the hand, and begged to know when they were to set out. Jaques informed him no delay could be made, as they intended reaching Nismes that night, and they now only waited his pleasure and the horse the landlord had undertaken to provide for his use. No sooner was it prepared, than Isidore rose to follow his conductors, and upon the assurance of Jaques, that he knew the young man, if he once gave his word, would follow them as quiet as a lamb, the cord was taken off his hands and feet, much to the satisfaction of the

servant-girl, who though she could not refuse herself the gratification of looking at him in his distress, was extremely concerned that so fine and handsome a youth should have his hands tied like a common thief. Before quitting the house, he renewed his solicitations, that the landlord, in the event of the old Pilgrim's return to the baraque, would not fail to inform him of his situation, and at the same time slipped such a douceur into his hand, that the host, most unexpectedly gratified, made a lower bow than he might in a soberer moment have judged consistent with his lawful zeal and indignation against a prisoner.

There were several loiterers still about the door, attracted by the sight of the well-accoutred horses belonging to the soldiers, and amongst them Isidore recognised the same officious pedlar, who seemed

busily occupied in fixing on his saddle. As he mounted, he leant a little towards him, and the pedlar, in his former tone of mystery, lamented bitterly the arrival of these men, which, he said, had frustrated the prettiest plan that ever the head of man had framed. "But fear not," he added, "there are those who can serve you yet." "We must have no whispering," cried the elder guard, prancing his horse up, so as to make the pedlar start with fear from its tramplings.

"I was only offering the young gentleman," he cried in a whining voice, "something in the way of my trade; I thought linen might run short upon such a sudden summons, and no man of spirit likes to die in public unless in a fine Holland shirt."

"Stand out of my way," cried the soldier, "or you'll have something in the way of my trade, I take it." And so say-

ing he led the march, followed by Jaques and Isidore, who turned in sad silence from a spot where so unexpected, and perhaps fatal, an interruption to his happiness and fortune had occurred.

His companions at first made some ineffectual attempts to draw him into conversation, hoping by that means to dissipate the weight that seemed to hang upon his mind; but perceiving by the inattention of his replies, that the grief lay too deep for them to medicine, they ceased to molest him, and with a delicacy not always found in a more exalted rank, continued talking to each other without disturbing his reflections. In this manner they proceeded along a rich level country, covered with the soft green of the luxuriant olive, till the ancient city of Nismes, and the Tour Magne rising in solemn grandeur over the vast extent of

magnificent ruins and modern buildings stretched below, presented itself to their view. After winding along the narrow streets that compose what might be termed the suburbs of the town, they reached the gate of France, where, however, a ready sentinel suffered them to pass, and continuing their way, came at last to the open esplanade, the favourite resort of loungers, who were reposing under the rows of trees, or sauntering to the melody of music along the smooth gravel walks. Here the gloomy walls of the city prison first presented themselves to Isidore's view, and excited feelings which none but a captive can enter into. Beside the house of woe rises that vast majestic amphitheatre which for so many ages has awakened the astonishment of all beholders. Wrapt in silent admiration, he stood for a few moments in utter forget-

fulness of his own situation to gaze upon its ruined greatness, the

> Mountainous pile! o'er whose capacious womb
> Pours the broad firmament its varied light,
> While from the central floor the seats ascend
> Round above round, slow widening to the verge,
> A circuit vast and high,

which the merciless hand of the barbarian had not been able entirely to deface, and which time, while robbing it of its more finished splendour, had only rendered more solemn and commanding. As his guards were making the necessary inquiries previous to his reception in the prison, Isidore traversed the space before the arena, unable to turn his eyes from an object which so completely riveted his attention. The night was dark, but vivid flashes of summer lightning seemed to wrap the vast edifice in one sheet of flame. For a moment, the bold sweep of the walls, the triple row of lofty arches, the

ornamented columns, were given to the view as clearly as life; the noon-day sun, had poured his refulgence upon them, and they then disappeared in impenetrable gloom. Again the lightning flashed over them. It seemed as if some kind enchanter shook his torch in the skies to dazzle his sight with so much grandeur during these last instants of freedom. It was such a scene as those who have once beheld it cannot easily forget, and never will the majestic pile impress such feelings of awe upon the mind, as when thus displayed by the sublimest light in nature. The low thunder was growling at a distance, not a breath of air could be felt, and the white flag hung motionless from the top of the amphitheatre. At length the keeper of the prison announced that all was ready for his admission; he passed the gate, and the wind that rushed along

the high-vaulted passages felt chilly and cold when contrasted with the oppressive heat of the outward atmosphere. All was darkness and misery, and when Isidore heard the iron door close upon him, and the kind farewell of his conductors, he threw himself upon his straw mattress in the corner of his cell, and gave way to feelings of hopeless despondency.

CHAPTER IX.

Sent. Who's there? answer quickly,
Who's there?
Rolla. A Friar come to visit your prisoner.
Pizarro.

On the same evening that Isidore entered within the gloomy walls of the prison, Pierre passed through Nismes, on his way to the town of Beaucaire, at that season the resort of the votaries of commerce, wealth, and gaiety, attracted by the expectation of the approaching fair. Unconscious that the object of his expedition was then so near him, he quitted the city towards the close of night; nor could he see, without astonishment, the crowds of passengers of all descriptions, of carriages of

every form and degree of elegance or clumsiness, which, even at this hour, thronged the road. Here a light cabriolet conveyed the merchant intent on his schemes of speculation—the ponderous "gondola" bore slowly along a few dozen shopkeepers of inferior merit and celebrity, who, impelled by the love of gain, had, for a few days, forsaken their accustomed counters, to display their commodities at this celebrated fair; voitures without number, calashes and charbands of the most antiquated forms rolled away; crowds of country people, eager for the annual sport, came jocund along, mounted on bouriques, or jolting in the rattling cart; while the weary mules, destined to draw them to this scene of amusement, seemed scarcely able to move, under the united weight of packages and passengers. Young and gallant horsemen dashed tri-

umphantly by, scarcely checking their career, to lavish a few jests on the pretty country lasses as they passed; while the more humble pedestrians, panting and toiling through the clouds of dust, almost wished they had been content to remain at home, and could have assumed sufficient courage to say, unmoved, they had never been at the fair of Beaucaire.

At regular intervals, small parties of cavalry watched over the public convenience and safety, assisted by the guardes champêtres from the country round, who found this a more entertaining service, than seizing on the young plunderers of the vineyards and fruit-trees; and as their sabres glittered in the sun, and their spirited horses pranced and champed against the bit, their appearance gave a lively air to the motley scene.

On approaching nearer to Beaucaire,

the confusion increased proportionably, and it was not without some labour that Pierre, accustomed to the freedom and tranquillity of a country life, could stem the torrent, which, rolling in various directions, bore him against his will, through several avenues of the town. The streets, which during the remainder of the year, present to the eye of the traveller the grass-grown neglected appearance of poverty and desolation, were now so thronged that some strength was requisite to make way through the crowds. Every house swarmed with inhabitants, every face bore the marks of business or of gaiety; all seemed determined to be pleased, and to support with courage the united evils of poor accommodations, exorbitant charges, deafening noise, and suffocating heat. With difficulty Pierre, whose appearance, though calculated to

impress the mind with respect when force was in question, did not betoken that wealth to which alone at such a moment deference was to be yielded, procured in a second-rate cabaret, the refreshment which was so necessary after his fatigues; and having taken such repose as he could obtain upon a pack of woollen goods, amidst the din of voices and the mingled scents of tobacco and soup, he prepared to fulfil his commission. The day was by this time far spent, and he found it no easy task to proceed through the main street, lined as it was on both sides with tents and booths, occupied by venders of both sexes, eager to set off to the greatest advantage their various articles, which exhibited all the splendour furnished by the East and West, and all the refinements and delicacies that can tempt the eye or palate. From every booth loud

solicitations arrested the attention of the numerous saunterers; and the cunning chapman, suiting his lavish commendations to the apparent fancy of the purchasers, made his profit of their vanity or credulity. He was the more eager to despatch his work with speed, and dispose of his merchandise, as the close of day warned him that the attractive charms of the prairie would soon draw away every customer, and was himself equally desirous of sharing in a scene presenting to the imagination all the brilliancy and variety of romance. It was to the prairie also that Pierre was anxious to hasten, for there were assembled those of every rank and description whom the business or humours of the fair had brought together. Each nation might be said to have its representatives in that mingled crowd; the solemn Turk, chew-

ing opium with the same sang froid as if seated in his divan in the light kiosk; the sober German, puffing from his short pipe the perfume he so much loves; the fantastic Italian; the wary Dutchman; the fur-clad Russ, sighing for his congenial snows; even the steady Briton, the proud-daring Spaniard, and the fair-haired Swede, in the dresses of their respective countries, united in the vast brotherhood of traffic and barter; nor were the far-distant Chinese, or the tawny Lascar, wanting to complete the assemblage. Gay parties of revellers, clad in all the luxury of taste and splendour, mixed with these strangers, and groups of peasants, presenting to view the fantastic costume of the country, harmonized well amongst them. Every sport that mirth or idleness could require was at hand for the amusement of the company. Bands

of music, dispersed about, filled the air with their inspiring sounds. The tinkling guitar, and lively castanet roused the light-footed dancers, while others joined in the chorus of romance and song. In various parts the tables were crowded with those who whiled away their time with cards or dice; near at hand the active tumbler gained a few pence by his skill, the fortune-teller enriched himself by the credulity of the old and young, and the juggler bewitched them with his wonderful tricks of slight of hand. Parties of young Savoyards, leading about monkies and marmosets, danced the steps and sung the simple airs of their much-loved mountains, and shows and equestrian exploits drew the attention of numbers. Tents of every form and size were spread about; some clouded with the smoke of the all-bewitching pipe—others served by

smiling damsels, presenting the refreshments best suited to the purse and taste of every class, from the vender of iced water to the gay limonadiere, who had been wafted down the Rhone from Lyons to delight the assembled crowds with the grace with which she condescended to offer her sherbets and café. Thousands of lights gave a brilliancy to the fanciful scene, which the glaring eye of day would in part have dissipated; and as their splendour was reflected in the broad waters of the Rhone, the glittering wave seemed to roll in liquid fire.

In the midst of the numbers who, satisfied with the pleasure of the moment, had cast from them all consideration of past or future care, Pierre passed without experiencing any emotion but that of pity for what he considered the degeneracy of his fellow-creatures. New as such a

spectacle was to his simple mind, it was far too uncongenial with his taste to detain his steps. With a searching eye, he gazed on the motley groups, indifferent alike to the jest, the laugh, or the merry song; till after much fruitless trouble he stopped at length before a booth less gaily decorated than the rest, and surmounted by a black flag, where two or three countrymen were eagerly engaged at a game of cards round a small oak table. The owner of the tent was dealing out annisette to a band of thirsty musicians, who were quarrelling at the door, and his little girl perceiving that Pierre regarded him with great earnestness, pulled his coat to awaken his attention to the stranger. The man turned round, and on a significant sign from Pierre, left his employment, and following him outside the tent, eagerly inquired whom he sought.

"Father Bernardine, where is he?" replied Pierre, in a low voice, at the same time repeating his sign. The man nodded, and going up to the table, motioned one of the players to rise; he obeyed, and coming up to Pierre, desired he would attend him. Pierre hesitated, but a glance from the master of the tent, decided him to obey, and the latter watching their departure, till they were lost in the crowd, resumed his former occupation. They made their way in silence, and after leaving the prairie, Pierre followed his companion along some of the most unfrequented lanes of the town, where only a few half-intoxicated stragglers, joyously carolling as they strolled along, arm linked in arm, crossed their way. At length they turned to the bridge of boats connecting the towns of Beaucaire and Tarascon, which lies on the opposite bank

of the Rhone, and which has acquired notoriety, and the pleasure of an annual commemorative festival, from the destruction of the furious marine monster, called a Tarasc, which, though capable of overpowering all resistance, yielded instantly to the force of St. Martha's apron-string. After answering the summons of the guard, the draw-bridge was let down, and its massy chains rattled under their tread.

How different was the scene they now contemplated, from that which they had so lately quitted. A few lamps suspended on ropes across the bridge, by their dim light, served to make darkness more visible, and the distant sounds of mirth and music that reached the ear, contrasted strangely with the hoarse dash of the rushing flood which rolled under their feet. Behind them lay the picturesque town of Beaucaire, with its half ruined

castle, as if suspended from the summit of a steep rock; before them, Tarascan, with its long lines of fortifications and castellated walls, recalling to mind the power of the Sicilian King, by whom they were erected. On reaching the latter place, they proceeded still in silence along those streets which were least traversed by strangers, till they at length reached a large gateway, the entrance to some abode, formerly of great magnificence, but which time and neglect had greatly injured. A slight knock was immediately answered by the wicket's opening, as if by enchantment, and they stepped into a large grass-grown court; but the windows of the house were broken—the shutters falling off their hinges, and the whole appearance sufficiently testified it to be uninhabited. As no closed door opposed their progress, they walked up the steps,

and Pierre feeling that, even were mischief intended, he could not now recede—continued to follow his companion down to what had evidently been the kitchens and domestic apartments of this splendid mansion, but which certainly exhibited no symptoms, at present, of its former hospitality. After traversing a long passage, a low sound of voices was heard, and his guide desiring him to stop, entered by a door at the further end, which immediately closed after him.

It may be easily imagined, that Pierre's reflections at this moment were not entirely unmixed with apprehension, and the darkness in which he was involved, with the melancholy noise of water rushing by, and sounding almost as near as when it laps against the side of a vessel in a calm, did not contribute to raise his spirits. After waiting a few minutes,

however, the door again opened, and Father Bernardine cautiously advanced, evidently as fearful of being seen, as he was anxious to satisfy his curiosity. But no sooner did he recognise Pierre, than throwing off all reserve, he led him into the apartment he had just quitted, which was large, though low-roofed, and by the faint light they suffered to burn, discovered about fifteen or twenty men of dark suspicious appearance, amongst whom Pierre easily knew several smugglers, with whom he was well acquainted. In different parts of the room, bales of contraband goods were lying in profusion; piles of arms, kegs of brandy, shot, and gunpowder, seemed to form part of their traffic; which, from the situation of the house, built on the very border of the Rhone, it was easy for them to introduce without suspicion; and one of more authority than the rest,

was busily employed in making out and arranging accounts with a young man, whom he knew to be deep in the Father's confidence. Some might, from their looks and gestures, be supposed "to be seated in council high, and sage debate;" but the greater part absorbed in the pleasures of the table, seemed indifferent to every thing, but the good supper spread before them, and which they devoured with a silent earnestness, well suited to men of their irregular mode of life, who seldom dare expose themselves to detection, by the indulgence of mirth and noisy revelry. The Pilgrim, who had been interrupted in his occupation of inspecting some fire-arms, desired Pierre would partake of the refreshment, and when his hunger was satisfied, drawing him into the recess of an iron-grated window that looked upon the river, begged to know the cause of this

visit, when the interests of the common good called him into a far different direction. Without apology, Pierre replied, by stating the circumstances of the appearance of Simon Chas, at St. Florent; of the unpleasant intelligence he had brought respecting Isidore; and the request of Madame Durand, that he would employ every means he could command, in order to rescue him from the power of Vidal; adding also to his recital, the gold ornament which Rose la Porte had, with so much earnestness, given into his care. The old man took the locket, and gazing on it for some time, appeared lost in thought. At length he said, "Did you mention to the lady where you expected to find me?"

"Do you take me for a fool or a knave?" said Pierre, somewhat indignantly.

"For neither," replied the Pilgrim,

"but for a young man, more zealous than cautious, fitter, perhaps, to be trusted in great matters, than in trifles; however, this affair is no trifle; it is of more importance than you can be aware—you did well to come, but there are others who must hear the tale,—do you also listen." Thus saying, and composing his countenance, which it appeared the sudden intelligence had somewhat ruffled, he resumed his place at the table, and commanding silence and attention, addressed the smugglers thus.—"It is but seldom, friends, you see me grieve—my spirit is above it, and if I own that I do now lament, it is as much on your account as my own. Our enterprise has, I fear, met with delay. The chief I have long promised you; the leader whom you have sworn to obey, is for a season torn from us. Our enemies are on the alert; assisted

by the powers of darkness, who are always stirring up the wicked, they roam abroad, their reign is short, and their fury is therefore great—what wonder that at every turn, I should find it hard to baffle them. For a little time we must arm ourselves with patience—it is the first virtue of a soldier; when we next meet, we will throw patience to the winds, and buckle on the helmet and the sword, as becomes men and martyrs." A low murmur of discontent ran through the assembly at these words, and some even dared openly to express their dissatisfaction at such frequent delays.

"We are none of your godly ones," said they, "like those fools in the mountains, who will wait till they rot in the grave for signs and tokens from heaven: we want not your Davids and your Gideons. Men of other mettle will do

for us, and the word of a stout captain is worth all your visions and your lights. We have rights to claim, sword in hand, as well as they, though haply of a more carnal nature; nor will we lose a fair occasion for the sake of this puppet of straw, this will-o-the-wisp who exists, perhaps, only in your imagination. Lead us yourself, if that be your will, but do not drive us to extremities." The old man frowned, and struck his clenched hand on the table.—" Murmurs!" he exclaimed, " is it for this I have toiled, is this ungrateful return the reward for the care I have taken of your interests? Speak but another word, and I leave you to that fate your rashness and ignorance would bring down upon you, for are you not like your skiffs, when drifting without helm or pilot before the gale, unless I guide and control you? Wait but a few days, and I

pledge my word, either to meet you as fixed at Father Gabriel's cell, or to send in my place him whom I have promised—death alone can cancel this promise."

The men, who, fierce as their element, were as easily soothed, began to modify their tone, and express their earnest desire for the continuance of his assistance; and the short debate ended by their agreeing to the engagement proposed, when they looked forward to meeting under happier auspices, and in the mean time each determined to provide for his own concealment. Some, and amongst them Pierre's guide, immediately left the house, secure of safety amongst the motley crowds that the fair had assembled; the remainder prepared to pass the night upon their bales of goods, and take boat the following morning for the grand Camarque, which was their favourite retreat, and they soon

fell asleep in sweet forgetfulness of stratagems and treasons. Pierre threw himself in one corner beside them, but unaccustomed to the closeness of the pent-up air, so different from the free and stirring breath of the mountains, his respiration was oppressed, and a feverish restlessness prevented him from closing his eyes: he thus was constrained to become a spectator of the Pilgrim's night-watches. So far from needing that long repose which other men imagine they require, the hours usually dedicated to sleep were often, for him, those in which his mind laboured with most intensity. As he sat buried in deep reflection by the lamp which threw its unsteady light full on his pallid cheek and silver hair; so striking and energetic was his countenance, that it seemed as if some mighty Spirit possessed his aged frame, and raised his soul to conceptions

far beyond its worn-out powers. His eye sparkled—his nostril was distended—determination was in his look, and so strong was the excitement to which he yielded, that the big drops fell unheeded from his brow. His lips moved rapidly, though no sound could be caught, as if he was entering into a compact with himself, which nothing mortal could have the power to shake—"Yes!" he at length exclaimed, in a voice, which though low, thrilled to the very heart's core, "they cannot always frustrate my schemes. The warning voice I have so often heard, when all has been silence to other ears, speaks plainly now. I must dally no longer. Some mysterious obstacle is to be removed between me and success, and my death alone can effect that:—thus said the voice—I care not, so that in the last moment I can but hear that my sin is atoned for! How the sacri-

fice is to be accomplished I know not, but I feel the breath of the king of terrors upon me; I will not withhold from him his prey. Now, oh Lord! I come a willing victim to thine altar; now thou wilt again hearken to me, for thou seest that I shrink not. Poor clods of earth," he continued, turning to the sleeping smugglers, " they little think in their haste how much my eagerness exceeds theirs, and that what I pant for is the grave! the grave, in which my revenge even will be swallowed up." His wallet and staff had been thrown aside in one corner of the room; he now rose to fetch them, and laid them on the table by which he was seated: then taking the staff in his hand, he touched a secret spring, and separating in two, it discovered the glittering blade of a small dagger sheathed within it. On holding it close to the flame of the lamp, some

spots of blood appeared on its surface; he took a cloth as if to wipe them off, but shook his head, and with a smile of ferocious triumph, again sheathed the treacherous weapon. He next opened the wallet, and drew from it a little iron box, which contained papers that he began to examine with great attention. A few he selected and deposited in a side-pocket of his dress, and returning the box into the wallet, laid his head on the table in the hope of obtaining some moments of that unsound repose which he seemed at all times able to command. Deeply reflecting on what he had just witnessed, Pierre also at length composed himself to sleep, but the first light of dawn scarcely passed with uncertain glimmer through the iron-grated window, and the genius of traffic had not yet roused his votaries to their arduous devotion, when

Father Bernardine starting up, awoke Pierre, and desired he would follow him. There was little need of leave-taking, since they left their companions of the night either sunk in profound slumber, or half aroused by their voices, turning on their heavy sides, and in a state of indistinct consciousness muttering curses against the obtruding day, which brought neither peace nor happiness to them. Leaving the house with extreme caution, they proceeded along the same way which Pierre had before traversed through the towns of Tarascon and Beaucaire. A few sons of industry, anticipating the dawn of day, were the only persons they met in the silent streets, and taking the road to Nismes they passed quickly along, scarcely noticing the courteous salutations which the Pilgrim received from the travellers, who had preferred the cooler hours of

night for their journey to the fair. When they had continued their journey for some time in this manner, the Pilgrim stopped, and informed Pierre they must now part. "You," he continued, "who have duties to fulfil that will not brook delay, cannot accompany me, nor would you be permitted, did nothing else prevent. You need not be anxious respecting Madame Durand; St. Florent is far out of your way, and I will undertake to ease her apprehensions; nay more, to prepare for her the only joy she is capable of tasting in this world. We meet as appointed at Father Gabriel's cell—till then farewell—may the blessing of a good conscience go with you."

Pierre felt some degree of curiosity to know by what means the Father was about to accomplish his design of extricating Isidore from the Consul's grasp,

but he knew all questions to be vain. The imperfect confidence which this inexplicable man reposed in his various emissaries was only sufficient to guide them in the narrow path he assigned them; and, except in what was necessary to this, they were never informed. He therefore pursued the road to the mountains, and Father Bernardine that which led to the Priory of St. Roc, where on his arrival the following day, he demanded and received instant permission to speak with the Prior. Aware of his increasing dislike to Vidal, and of the suspicions which he had himself excited in his mind, the intention of the Father was to represent this illegal nomination of Isidore as a stretch of power, which, while it served the Consul's private ends, might increase the ferment already excited among the Protestants, and even

disturb the tranquillity of the district. What was therefore his surprise, when, without allowing him time to speak, the Prior informed him that a messenger had that morning arrived from Nismes, charged to acquaint him with the apprehension of Isidore Delorme, accused of having murdered an old soldier at the Baraque of Corvisson, and to vindicate, under these circumstances, the detention of his vassal in prison. A thunder-bolt bursting at his feet could not have caused greater consternation in the mind of the Pilgrim. Horror-struck, he gasped for breath, and a less experienced hypocrite must have betrayed more than was at that moment expedient should be known. "It is impossible, my lord," he at length exclaimed; "quite impossible—I know the youth well. This is, depend upon it, some new device of Monsieur Vidal's;

the youth is better favoured than he is; there has been some dispute in a love-affair, and the Consul is not over-scrupulous in his methods of revenge. You see how he abuses the authority you have confided to him, and regardless of your interest, follows the guidance of his passions. A vassal of your's, my lord, to be thus seized upon a bare suspicion! A vassal of the Church! Holy Mary preserve us from such a scandal. Let me go to Nismes; with your order they will permit me to see the prisoner, and I think I have art enough to separate the truth from the falsehood in the words of a giddy stripling of twenty."

"To that," answered the Prior, "I can have no objection, if you consider the affair worth the trouble, though it does not yet appear that Vidal has had any hand in his arrest. However, you and I,

my old friend, know pretty well that those who work secretly do not work the less surely. Is the young man's father living? I scarcely remember the name, and am sorry it is first brought to my notice coupled with such an accusation."

"No, my lord," said the Pilgrim, "he is the son of a widow, an honest woman, who rents one of your smallest farms, and has brought up this only child amid much of the bitterness a widow's heart must feel. My endeavours have not been wanting to bring him over to the true faith."

"That is right," said the Prior, "you shall have the order for to-morrow morning; it does not suit your years and gravity to turn night into day like the light-handed fraternity. I would have justice done to all who call me master, and if you discover it is this foolish love-

affair that makes the Consul so ready in stratagems to clear the village of his rivals, I will find a way to teach him that his conduct is as unworthy as the passion itself is unseemly in one of his age." Father Bernardine would willingly have waived all thoughts of fatigue or propriety, and have set out immediately, so painful was all delay to his feelings; but an appearance of too much anxiety might have excited surprise, and he was therefore compelled to seat himself with patience, and pass the remainder of the evening in listening to projects in which his heart felt no interest, and which even his memory could not retain. Happily the Prior was not quick in suspecting that he did not occupy the entire attention of those whom he conversed with, and after the honour of a supper, to which none of the Brothers were admitted, the

order was at length given, and a stout and safe mule commanded to be ready for the Pilgrim's use at an early hour of the ensuing morning. Once mounted, Father Bernardine made the animal choose another pace from that which habit had almost made natural to him, and being at length convinced it was neither Brother Saturnine nor Brother Benedict, quiet souls! who now so impatiently shook his bridle, and pressed his sides with the well-nailed shoe, the mule roused the mettle for which, before his reception into the Priory, he had been so eminently renowned among jockies and horse-dealers, and performed the journey, so as to convey the Pilgrim to the gate of the prison at Nismes long before the hour which precluded all intercourse with the prisoners.

During this time, Isidore, excluded from light, and almost from air, inhaled a damp

and fetid atmosphere, that greatly served to increase the depression of his spirits. The hours passed, it is true, for time waits not for sorrow or joy; but their progress was so unvaried, he could almost imagine it stood still, lest any alleviation should be brought to his sufferings. He knew too well, how many lie forgotten in these abodes of misery, to indulge much in hope; and he was too new to sorrow, to feel at once that solace, which religion reserves for the comfort of the wretched. Night scarcely brought its additional darkness to the cell, nor could the cheerful beams of returning day penetrate into its recesses. One dull unvarying twilight reigned; one sad silence, interrupted only by the drops of water, that, slowly gathering on the roof, fell upon the stone pavement, when their weight could support itself no longer. Once each day, the

surly gaoler brought his food, which, on the following, he took away scarcely touched, and muttering against the daintiness of some people, who had been better fed than taught, or they would not, he supposed, be there. But on the third evening, when, as usual, on hearing the door locked at his departure, Isidore heaved a deep sigh, it seemed as if the sound was repeated more distinctly than even by the echo of walls, long accustomed to every expression of woe. He started from his mattress in amazement, and looked eagerly round through the gloom, to perceive from whence it came. Could it be possible, or did fancy and the gathering shadows deceive him? No! it was, indeed, Father Bernardine, who had sought him, who had visited him in his distress, and he threw his arms round the old man's neck, with feelings of affection

far warmer than that compassion which he had hitherto expressed towards him. The Pilgrim gazed around in silence, and then seating himself on a large stone, to which, by means of a ponderous iron ring, some unhappy creature had perhaps once been chained—he burst into tears.

"You returned then to the baraque?" said Isidore, eagerly, "you know my sad history and my innocence?"

"I did not, my son," replied the Pilgrim; "I was going to ask why are you here? Why do I see you thus? Yet, why should I ask, I, who have been, during your whole life, the cause of your misfortunes. Yet, this is not a time for lamentations, but for action; the few moments I can spare are precious, and I have much to tell you. Listen to me, my son; survey your present situation, recollect the happiness you aspire to, consider that

your life is in danger from the perverseness or blindness of unprincipled men, or that, if that is reprieved, your liberty is lost. Think upon your blasted hopes, your honour suspected, friendless poverty your only portion, and when your whole soul is stung with the contemplation, tell me what you would do to have all this exchanged for freedom, wealth, renown, and love, aye, and revenge too, the choicest boon of all? Does not your heart throb at the idea? Do you not feel ready to embrace at any price the blessings which I offer?"

"Holy father," said Isidore, "was it to mock me with such vain discourse that you came hither?"

"To mock you!" replied the Pilgrim: "look at my withered cheek—look at my white hair and shaking limbs, and say, if there seems aught like mockery there.

No, my hours of sport are over, I have but few now to live, and in those few the black misdeeds of years are to be compensated. But before I briefly explain, what I have at length summoned courage to reveal, you must grant me your forgiveness: on my knees I implore it: refuse not to an old man that pardon you may want from your Heavenly Judge, and let it be free and generous before those offences are revealed, which perhaps you could not then forgive!"

It was with extreme difficulty that Isidore raised him from the ground, and he could scarcely calm his agitation by renewed assurances of indemnity, though ignorant of what could call for it. Indeed, his distress appeared so exaggerated and extraordinary, that he at length ventured to beg an explanation, at the same time giving him the paper he had found on the

poor murdered man, and which, from presenting his own name on the list, had excited in him much curiosity. The Pilgrim took the paper, and reading it over with a bitter smile, tore it in a hundred pieces, and as they flew about the cell, "So vanish," he cried, "the schemes of all those who would harm you, of all who would unite us in peril, as closely as I trust we shall be united in resolution:" then, after a short pause, he continued, "I can easily understand the aim of that paper: we were to be placed under the watchfulness of men, already too much accustomed to cruelty, to be over-nice in the manner of exercising it, but they are defeated: yet, mysterious are the ways of Providence: the punishment of my sins often destroys my fairest plans, and I am made your murderer, when I would be your preserver. You

know, my son, how I have watched over you; you know how deeply I have been interested in what concerns you; the moment is at length arrived that all mystery must cease, and that you must learn who I am, and who you are."

"Who I am," repeated Isidore, "I should have thought that, my good father, involved no great mystery."

Without appearing to notice his remark, the Pilgrim proceeded thus. "The noble family of De Courcy was ruined; its chief fled—his lady, perhaps the fairest and the best the world e'er saw, could not survive the shock. One stem remained—one lovely flower bloomed still, though far from the parent plant, and I———."

"You did not murder the child?" interrupted Isidore, eagerly.

"No," cried the Pilgrim, "but I tore it away from its shelter; I placed it where

the cold winds of adversity blew keenly upon its tender blossoms—where the stony ground yielded no moisture to refresh it, and now that it has braved every blast, and sprung up more vigorous from each assault, I have again bent it to the earth, and threatened it with destruction."

"I entreat you, father," said Isidore, "to explain yourself; this is no time for fables."

"Nor is what I tell you a fable," replied the Pilgrim; "Charles de Courcy, receive your rightful name, and learn that it is I who have so long kept you in obscurity."

Astonishment for some time rendered Isidore silent, and yet the intelligence did not overpower him. It seemed as if the old man's words opened to him the sphere in which alone he felt that he was born to move; but could such a thing

be true? By what means was it to be proved? How was he to convince others of what it seemed rashness even to believe himself? He dared not utter these questions aloud, but the Pilgrim marked how much his surprise was mixed with doubt and hesitation, and endeavouring to overcome his own feelings, gradually unfolded the circumstances that led to so strange an occurrence.

"My son," said the old man, "it is a long and painful history that I must relate to you; it is the confession of seventy years of iniquity. Bear with me, in pity, and be not the sharpest instrument of my punishment. Hardly as I seem to have dealt with you, you are all I now love in the world; it was long before I dared give way to the indulgence of such a blessed feeling, but you twined yourself round my heart, and touched once more that chord

which I thought had ceased to vibrate for ever."

After a short pause, during which the old man appeared to be recalling to his mind the memory of past events, and collecting firmness for some painful disclosure, he proceeded as follows.

CHAPTER X.

I lay and slept on Wardlaw-hill,
A heavenly tongue came crying—
Ho! sleep ye when God's banner bright
Is on the rough wind flying—
When swords are sharpened, lances whet,
And trumpets sound from Sion?
Awake—strike in your strength, and stride
O'er fields of dead and dying.

Then the fierce whirlwind of his wrath
Along the land went sweeping;
I heard the gnashing of men's teeth,
And wailing loud, and weeping.
God's sickle down the ripened ridge
Of wicked ones went reaping—
O'er all the earth let there be mirth,
And joy, and dance, and leaping.

LUKE LORANCE, *the Cameronian.*

"You have long known, my son, although ignorant of my reasons for concealment, that the dress I wear belongs to a religion

I do not profess; but you know not, that you see before you a wretch, polluted by every crime which has stained our fallen nature—apostate from the faith in which I was bred, false to the friends who trusted me, degraded by sensuality and rapine, and torn by all those passions which form the torment of the very fiends! My father was, by occupation, a miller—by religion, a Huguenot, zealous for his faith, fervent in his devotion, and bringing his children up in the strictness of parental discipline. From my earliest childhood, I spurned at every control, but I was cursed with cunning and dissimulation sufficient to contrive, and with abilities to carry on, every species of deception. Fool that I was! I loathed the long prayers and preachings of our sect, even while with hypocritical sanctity I was the foremost to attend them. These exercises

were accompanied with danger, and my spirit, which required to be ever in excitement, enjoyed the stir, the hair-breadth escapes, and imminent perils we encountered. It was during my earliest youth, that those events had occurred, with which you are probably acquainted, and which produced such wonderful effects. A few of our brethren had determined to deliver from captivity and torture some of their unhappy friends, detained in dungeons by the persecuting Abbot of Chaila, and they swept that monster from the earth. This spark, which a drop of water might then have extinguished, spread with rapidity. The severity of the edicts promulgated against us—the pains to which we were exposed, were no longer to be borne. Our pastors dragged to death or slavery—our religious assemblies dispersed by force of arms, and those who

assisted at them, shut up in prisons or the galleys, called aloud for such resistance as Christians and Freemen have a right to make, and we were both. Never did a purer spirit burn, than was kindled in the bosoms of the greater part of those who found themselves thus forced to stand up for their faith. They mourned over the blood their enemies compelled them to spill—they lamented the blindness of their rulers, who, by the fatal revocation of the edict of Nantes, had sworn their destruction; they abhorred the excesses, which, in a mixed multitude, private hatred often perpetrates under the cloak of public zeal, but they had the religion of the gospel to defend, and they would not tamely witness the weak among the brethren terrified into embracing the idolatry they detested. The true Protestants fought only for life and liberty of conscience; the ambition

which stimulates worldly souls was unknown to them, and while their fervent zeal lasted, the blessing of the Lord accompanied their going out.

" But the policy of foreigners ere long interfered; they were misled by men who used them as a handle for their selfish schemes; above all, base hypocrites, and I was one, wearing a fairer deportment than most, joined themselves to their conquering bands, and by their cankerous venom polluted the cause they pretended to serve. History will involve all in one common censure, or vindicate all by one common praise, but the All-seeing eye can distinguish between them. I was but nineteen when I first became inflamed with the account of the achievements performed by our brethren, and burned to exchange what I considered as the wearisome bondage of a professor for the glory

of a champion. At this period, by one blow, all to whom I was bound on earth were rent from me; we will speak of it afterwards—to suffer my thoughts now to dwell on that event would close my lips, and I have much to say. Not the she-bear, when robbed of her cubs, goes forth with more fury against the hunters than I did to meet the foe. My brain was on fire, my thoughts confused; it seemed as if public and private wrongs strove with each other which should spur me on to deepest vengeance. Strange imaginations passed through my mind—visions of more than mortal meaning haunted my slumbers, and a power I could not resist seemed to direct every step of my course. It was then that chance led me into the company of John Cavalier, the support of our party. Born like myself in low circumstances, his aspiring soul had over-

leapt every obstacle, and commanding events instead of yielding to them, he possessed that dominion over his followers which weak minds can never obtain. His appearance was by no means striking but a firm, yet gracious air won upon beholders, and, ignorant as he was of the art of war, men of all ages submitted to his boyish courage. At the moment in which I joined him, he also was smarting under the loss of a father and a brother seized by the royalists, who added the additional insult of rasing to the ground his house at Ribaute, which they considered as polluted by the birth of a rebel. We animated each other by the repetition of our wrongs, and swore never to accept of peace till purchased by the blood of our foes. Various other parties at the same time supported the Camisard cause, for that was the name of

contempt, but of doubtful origin, by which our adversaries distinguished us; amongst their chiefs, Roland, Catinat, Castanet, and Ravinel, were the most celebrated. Oh! what scenes of blood and devastation spread over this devoted land during more than ten years; our desperation struck terror into our oppressors. If they pursued, we disappeared for a time, and flying like the phantoms, to which they compared us, to another place, could only be traced by the ravage we committed wherever we passed. If they attacked us, we turned like lions on the prey, and taught the bragging boasters what a handful of *beggars* could achieve. We asked no mercy, and no mercy was shown; the cries of our friends expiring in crowds by the rack and the flames, our women torn from us by the brutal lust of the soldiery, our innocent children dashed

against the stones, our old men dragged by their grey hair along the ground, whole districts of our possessions given up to pillage and fire;—these were our calls to battle, and bravely and manfully we answered to them. Strong in the impregnable fastnesses of our mountains, three of the grand Monarque's renowned marshals were baffled in their attempts against us, and every where the loud chaunt which we raised to Heaven in praise for victory, belied the false report, that conversion, fear, or death, had silenced every heretic voice in the kingdom: the armies with which Louis XIV. had humbled great part of Europe could not subdue what they termed a handful of his rebellious subjects. It would be endless to relate all our combats, sometimes chequered by defeat or the hardships we endured, which, when the enthusiasm of

rage that I mistook for devotion was strong upon me, or the excitement of continual action supported my spirits, I could endure as well as others. But at length even danger lost its charm by losing its novelty, my warmth slackened, I was outwardly the same, but others were more admired, more listened to than me, and the worm of jealousy was already gnawing at my heart. Amongst our band we had men who, inflamed by overwrought zeal, assumed not only the task of teachers but of prophets. One of the most remarkable of these was Clary. Impressed with the authority of their mission, all bent before them, and I amongst the rest; but the piercing eye might perchance discern the smile of scorn on my lip, as I listened to the dictates of these oracles commanding us forth on expeditions on which the worldly

prudence of our leaders had already determined. The strictness too of our primitive discipline began by degrees to weary my impatient spirit. Thrice each day we were summoned to prayers; no victory was gained without a thanksgiving—no respite obtained, but it was spent in the exercises of devotion. No quarrel was permitted, neither theft nor slander; no oath polluted our discourse, no profane jests offended the most correct ears. The army of the Lord was to do his work in purity. My untouched heart could ill brook the form of outward morality which so perpetually opposed the inclinations that rioted within me, nor did I always remain unsuspected, and the restraint which this imposed upon me increased my irritation. One day in particular, Clary, seized with the usual convulsions which marked the moment

of inspiration, in such a manner as to arouse the attention of the whole troop, who, resting under the shade in a deep valley, had been lending a willing ear to his discourse, declared in a loud voice, that it was given him to know two traitors were then present. Silence ensued, when extending his arms, and marching with inflamed features round the circle, he laid them on a poor recruit, who had lately joined us, and who now stood trembling under his grasp. The credulous or politic Cavalier ordered his guard instantly to surround him, and aware of the impossiblity of flight, the other culprit sprang forward, and confessed his treason on his knees; they were put in irons, and not one voice murmured. 'This is not all,' continued Clary, excited by the awe he had struck, 'there are others infected. Near the bosom of our chief lurks the

mischief, and he whom he looks upon as his staff is ready to fail him; yes, my friends, Daniel Gui is that deceiver.'"

"Daniel Gui!" exclaimed Isidore, "the same whose name I found upon that list?"

"Yes," replied the Pilgrim, "that was my name; how it was now discovered I know not.—All eyes were fixed on me! I boldly denied the charge, but could I expect to be credited against a man who had once trod unhurt over the red-burning coals in support of his assertion? So universal was the empire which Clary had established over the minds of our people, that I was forced to make a lame and garbled confession, but of what? for I had formed no design—I could but say that strong temptation was upon me, and from that moment the caution with which I was regarded rankled in my breast, and

made me that which I was thought to be. Cavalier was still my friend; it may be that a feeling of unacknowledged sympathy bound us together. A severe defeat near Nages, the miserable state of the country, the loss of some of his stores, had inclined this chief to listen to terms of accommodation; perhaps at this time views of self-interest were beginning to replace that disinterested self-devotion, which too often wears out with long service. By means of La Combe, with whom he had formerly served as shepherd, he offered to negotiate with the royal commanders, and an interview was appointed him with Baville, Intendant of the Province, and Marshal Villars, in the garden of the Recollets at Nismes, then first polluted with the footsteps of heretics. Every precaution was taken to prevent treachery, sentinels and videttes were re-

gularly posted, and surrounded by a guard well armed and equipped, he entered the city. You should have seen the crowds of Protestants that before this very place pressed upon our march, the eager zeal with which they even endeavoured to touch the hands and clothes of him whose fame had so long rung in their ears. Proudly he rode, smiling on all around, and assuming a consequence well suited with his habits of command. They wondered at the youthful mien of one, whose exploits had made him pass for an experienced veteran, and all felt as if the honour he enjoyed was reflected on the party he had espoused. You must have heard of the result of that interview. Cavalier insisted on more than his noble opponents were empowered to grant; his demands were forwarded to the king, and until an answer arrived, we were to be

put in free possession of Calvisson, and there enjoy the long-neglected exercise of our religion. Our troops flew thither from every part; religious assemblies were unceasingly held, and the multitudes, who, deprived of their Pastors, had so long pined in the want of spiritual instruction, flocked to join the solemn services. Forty or fifty thousand persons were continually uttering hymns of praise; the night brought no intermission, and the ears of our enemies were forced to listen to the sounds which, of all others, they most abhorred. Yet not a hand dared rise against us, and the Protestant faith, springing from its ruins, seemed to triumph once more over every obstacle. For a moment the Vaunage, that beauteous country of the vine, the olive, and the pomegranate, promised peace as well as riches to its inhabitants. But I dwell too long

on these hours—alas! those which follow will have little interesting to detain me. The answer to our demands at length arrived from court. Liberty of conscience was nominally granted, but no temples were to be built, nor were our innocent brethren to be released from the galleys. Cavalier himself was permitted to raise a regiment, of which he was to be colonel. Careless whether his friends, with whom he had till then made common cause, agreed, he signed the treaty. The independent Roland refused to submit to such terms, and even in his own troop Cavalier soon found he had lost the confidence he so much valued.

"No sooner were his officers informed that the treaty fell short of the re-establishment of the edict of Nantes, than their fury knew no bounds. They lavished on him the epithets of traitor and coward,

and withdrew, under the command of Ravanel, to the mountains, followed by the greater part of the troop, and exclaiming, "No peace without our temples!" The confusion spread fast; with my utmost endeavours, I saved my chief from destruction; in vain, with about forty who remained faithful, we followed, while Cavalier cried out, "Let him who loves me, follow me;" Ravanel replied, "The sword of the Lord! long live the sword of the Lord!" and it was to his voice they yielded. Cast down and dispirited, he now found that he had indeed sacrificed his honour for a vapour, and had trusted too thoughtlessly to popularity, that most uncertain of all possession. His high spirit was broken, and we soon secretly withdrew to Lausanne. The quiet of this life ill suited with my turbulent disposition. I returned to France, though the en-

thusiasm with which the Camisard's cause had once inspired me was fled: my mind, ever open to new impressions, had rapidly imbibed the opinions of those I had lately frequented, and I looked upon my former companions as a set of obstinate rebels, who abused the patience of the Monarch, by contemning his mercy. Besides this, I had fallen into temptation; gold had been lavished on us, and it taught us a thousand wants, of which, till then, I was ignorant. Woman, too, lured me to my ruin: I fancied I loved, as if a heart like mine *could* love twice; my life was too mean a sacrifice for her who was the idol of the hour; she would have my soul, and I plunged it in destruction, to satisfy her whims.

"The remainder of the Camisards, after the treaty made with Cavalier, still continued the warfare, though many from

time to time made separate conditions, for the bond of unity which had rendered them invincible was broken. A price was set on the heads of Catinat and Roland; Roland! that brave chief, with whom I had so often fought and conquered, and I was the wretch who gained the wages of blood by betraying him!"

The old man hid his face in his hands, and seemed for a time unwilling to proceed. "I must be brief," he at length said. "The Syren I spoke of came to me for some bauble, which I could not purchase; a richer rival might, I thought, bribe her with it, and, stung by the suspicion, I determined to obtain the hundred louis offered for Roland's apprehension. I was willingly employed by the commander of the king's forces. My perfect knowledge of the country ensured success, and a party of dragoons secretly followed me to

the retreat of the veteran. Thirty years have elapsed since then, and more than as many crimes have succeeded that one, but never has the remorse for it ceased to sting. It was at the castle of Castelnau, near Troyes, that Roland was concealed with a few followers. The sentinel on watch, unmindful of danger, did not perceive our approach, till we had surrounded the place, and seized the gates. The brave Roland, with five of his companions, rushed from a back-way, determined to perish nobly as they lived. With his back against a tree, he stood firm, and dared the boldest to approach. I think I now see that proud, commanding countenance which kept his enemies long at bay—but in vain, a distant shot stretched him lifeless on the ground, and his friends losing all recollection in their grief for his loss, yielded like lambs. I saw them

dragged to the place of torture; I marked their heroic constancy and triumph over pain; I saw five prelates exulting in their agonies, and even then I envied them the rack and the wheel that tore their limbs to pieces.

"My treachery could not long be concealed, for it was known to a woman; the finger of scorn was pointed at me, and she for whom I had done the deed, was the first to shrink from my polluted touch. Never since has the name of Daniel Gui been pronounced by a Protestant without an execration, and yet I breathe! and yet I walk unhurt amongst them! In utter despair I left the country, and embarked at Cette, on board the first vessel that would receive me. My punishment was soon to begin. We were attacked by an Algerine corsair, boarded, and the vessel sunk: few like me escaped to lingering

torments. They were so dreadful, so tedious, that my unfixed principles again yielded, and I bowed to the Moslem's God, in hope of sharing in his sensual paradise. My chains were taken off, but I was not free; in the midst of the burning sands of Africa, or fanned by spicy gales amongst the Syrian groves, in the wild roar of the battle, or stretched in enervating indolence, and surrounded by all the incitements of eastern luxury, my heart seemed dead within me, and with each returning day my anguish recommenced. I fondly thought of my native land, as the wretch in the agonies of a fever of some favourite spring, which he thinks would quench his thirst, and at length, with infinite difficulty, I effected my escape. A burning climate had so changed my appearance, that I passed unknown, though my name was not forgotten, and I

had often to listen to the curses bestowed upon it.

" During my absence, the troubles in the Cevennes had ceased: the Protestants were beginning to enjoy a breathing time, a dubious and unsettled peace mixed with much oppression, yet needful to their very existence; but unable to claim kindred with them, I sought a precarious support, by serving the designs or passions of my superiors, and amongst others, obtained the protection of the old Baroness De Courcy, and, as usual, made it instrumental in injuring the innocent. You have already heard the tale of the Lady Laura's unhappy attachment and death, but not that I was the wretch, who, by conveying the Count's letter to the inflexible Baroness, led to that sad catastrophe. Curse on the talents, which, by enabling me to beguile others, have led to my own

undoing! The Baroness abhorring her instrument, after amply paying my service in the way I most desired, required me to leave the country, and I once more became a vagabond and outcast; innumerable are the perils I have run, but the mark of Cain was upon me, and man dared not take the vengeance of the Almighty out of his hand. It was during these wanderings, that, by arriving accidentally at the place where your banished father had taken up his abode, I learnt the misfortunes he had met with, and the arbitrary manner in which he had been deprived of his child. Fired with a solitary impulse of generous feeling, I determined to atone for the injury I had inflicted on one member of his family, by restoring you in secret to his arms. For this purpose, I hastened to the spot where you were brought up, and easily accom-

plished my design, but the spirit of generosity had fled; what was good could not long find a harbour in my breast; the temptation of making you a means of profit to me, either with the Baron or the Prior, whose inmost character I was well acquainted with, prevailed over every better feeling, and I gave up the satisfaction of contributing to a parent's happiness, for the uncertain prospect of future gain. Yet your childish graces soon softened me to other thoughts, and it is long since I have banished every idea but what tends to your advantage. It happened that poor Madeline Delorme, at that time, mourned the death of her only infant, and dreaded the grief of her husband, when, on his return after a short absence, he should find himself childless. It occurred to me, that your concealment in Vallerargues, so immediately under the eye of

the Prior and his vile parasite, Vidal, would not be suspected, and I easily persuaded her to adopt you as her own. For her own sake, I could rely on her discretion; she alone had recognised in me the traitor, shrouded from every other eye; but her gratitude bound her even to me, for I had once saved her father's life, and she either believed or pretended to believe the plausible tale I invented, which represented you as the offspring of guilt, rescued by my care from the hands of those who would stop at no deed to conceal their shame. My years passed as miserably as before, for, though I had now an object to which I turned in my darkest moments, and which taught my heart it was not dead to every emotion, yet I was like the poor paralytic, who is only awakened to feeling by sensations of pain. I was conscious how unworthy I was of gaining

your affection, and while your innocent caresses formed my only pleasure, I loathed myself while receiving them, as the wretch who knows that pestilence and disease are communicated by his touch. It is too true that there is no 'peace to the wicked.' I tried all the austerities of the Catholics, but I had not their faith; in cheating others I could not cheat myself. There is not a consecrated spot that I have not worn with my knees, or holy relic that I have not watered with my tears. Thrice have I traced at the sacred city the paths trod by our blessed Redeemer, and my blood dropping at every step from the knotted scourge; I have mingled the shrieks of pain with those of remorse. But repentance was strange to my heart, and at the foot of Calvary it has remained stubborn and unyielding as before. About three years ago, I was

sailing on the calm unruffled sea; the gentle murmur of the water rocking our vessel, that lay with its dark shadow in the bright moonlight, scarcely borne along by the lazy waves, had hushed me into an unusual calm, when amidst the watches of the night I heard a voice call me by my name, but the sound was so sepulchral that I started up with affright. Think not that I slept—I saw the heavy sails flapping against the cordage—I saw the tall mast with its streamer scarcely stirring; the deck on which I lay was strewed with cables, arms, and cases; and several of my companions, after the evening's debauch, were drowned in slumber around me. Nay, I heard the steersman's voice, as he drowsily called out the hour, as yet close at my feet the figure stood of one whom I had not seen for years, though he seemed fresh in my re-

collection as if we had parted yesterday. He wore the dress I was used to in my youth; a cloak of faded gray, his hat of large size, surmounted by a white feather; thick horseman's boots, and for arms a cutlass and pistols of antique form. Again he called, but when I looked on the death-like visage, the words of greeting died upon my lips. He gazed sternly on me, and opening his cloak, showed me his body torn with pincers and defaced by scars. 'Listen, Daniel Gui,' he said, 'if you hope for that mercy you have so often forfeited, avenge your brethren.' And sinking over the side of the deck, he vanished in the flood. The very hair of my head stood upright, cold dews bathed my forehead, I dared not call, and the livelong night I sat overpowered and motionless. Nor did the feeling vanish with the return of dawn; I swore to obey the

warning. Yes, I will avenge my injured countrymen, I exclaimed, to life's latest breath, and peace shall at last be my portion. Immediately I returned to this country, which I have never since quitted. I found that I had been too heedless of the wrongs of the Protestants, and that they still groaned under a yoke of iron. My ancient faith returned; my former zeal burned more fiercely from the intermission it had sustained. I have found hundreds who need but a chief to act again the bold part that has for ever immortalized our native mountains. Fired by my exhortations, they would have followed me as they did their leaders of old, ignorant of all respecting me, except my ardour in the good cause; but in the secret of my conscience I knew myself a traitor, and that I should disgrace the party I espoused. It is to you I turn—

to you, my son, I shall direct all eyes. I have with the greatest care prepared the minds of men for your return to claim your hereditary honours: even the haughty Prior is possessed with such an apprehension by my means; although blindly obeying my guidance, he vainly seeks to crush you under the form of any one against whom I please to direct his malice. Yes! the moment of reparation, Isidore, is arrived. I have sunk you in obscurity for a time, but I would now exalt you for ever. Listen to the dictates of your own heart. You are a De Courcy, assert your rights—you are a Protestant, vindicate your faith—you are a slave, strike boldly for freedom, and with your own, snatch the rights of thousands from their tyrannical oppressors. Think you the slow, timorous decrees of parliaments will do justice to a poor unfriended or-

phan, or refuse it to the chief of armed bands, determined to succeed or perish? No—never was a nobler destiny offered to mortal choice; cast not the honour from you—I have sworn that you shall not. Young man, if you refuse, dread the effect of my curse; you shall not deprive me of that revenge, which the dead left the grave to call upon me for."

Isidore stood speechless at the mixture of wildness and passion that characterized the whole of this account. Father Bernardine mistook the cause of his silence; "Fear not," he continued, "that means should be wanting. My sagacity has foreseen every thing. I have friends you little think of, and our stores of every kind are so well concealed, that the prying search of authority will be unable to discover them. Once, indeed, fortune seemed to betray us, and led that villain

Vidal to witness one of our secret deposits; but it was revealed to me by one who obtained the information he was sending to his patron, and I turned the fool's intelligence against himself. Here," he added, drawing out a paper which was concealed in his bosom, " is a list of the villages that will rise as soon as you give the signal. The government is on its guard, but strange rumours afloat in every direction keep its attention alive without allowing it to concentrate its resistance; here are the names of the chiefs who are to act under you."

" But," exclaimed Isidore, still uncertain what to object, " can these iron doors be burst open; can the wary and watchful guardians of the prison be deceived?"

" I have the means of opening them," replied the old man, " there is but bring-

ing the real murderer before them, and they will of themselves set you free."

"How," said Isidore, "is that to be done? Will he surrender himself to certain death?"

"That would he," replied the Pilgrim, "to raise in your bosom those sentiments that ought to spring there. Look at me steadily; are there marks of blood on these hands? all white, all clean—and yet—I did the deed."

"You! you killed him!" exclaimed Isidore, shrinking back with the horror which the confession of murder must naturally inspire.

"More firmness would better become you," cried the old man scornfully, "than that womanish start. Heaven grant your heart blanch not so soon as your cheek. Yes, I did the deed! and should the judge, in all his state mockery summon

me before him, and his satellites be ready with uplifted arm to deal the death-blow, I would repeat my words, and glory in so doing. I would say to him, 'Should the monster stand near you who had murdered your aged parents, cut the last veins in which flowed your kindred blood, smitten the young creature, dearer to you far than life; and not content with that, with fiend-like malice disfigure the fair temple from which the spirit had scarcly fled; when he boasted of the deed to your very face, would you not plunge your steel into his bosom, and hurry his soul to the regions fitted for him?' You heard him, my son; you heard the blood-thirsty boaster, and do you not glory in my vengeance? Oh it was but too weak! too short-lived!—it was the first moment's joy my heart has known since first its misery began. Yet think not, weary as I am of life, that I

shall tamely yield it. They dare not touch one hair of my head—they have not the power till my appointed time is come; but the shadows of death close fast around me. Trifle, therefore, no longer—escape for life—in my dress you will pass your guards securely—leave me to blind them, as I have done so many others—the mule is fastened outside the gate—delay not a moment."

"Impossible," cried Isidore, "they will consider you as accessory to my escape, and you will suffer accordingly for your generous concern."

The Pilgrim fixed his keen eye upon him. "These excuses, my son," he exclaimed, "savour more of timidity than compassion; can it be possible that a De Courcy should be a coward! Learn of me, then," and before Isidore could wrest it from him, he plunged a small knife into the

fleshy part of his arm. Though the wound was not dangerous, the blood flowed apace. "Now," he continued, hesitate no longer; it will be supposed that my feeble age could not resist your strength; before the alarm is given, you will be far away." The Pilgrim proceeded to strip himself of his upper garment and cloak, looking anxiously at Isidore, who, struck with astonishment at all that had passed, was pacing up and down his cell, scarce knowing how to express what he felt. "Be quick," cried Father Bernardine, as he twisted the linen girdle round his arm to stop the effusion of blood, "it grows late, my stay will be remarked; the fate of thousands depends on your speed, and your fate on my pleasure; for think not if I have been deceived in you, that you shall regain those honours to which you aspire."

" I aspire to no honours," replied Isidore, " but those which I can claim while fulfilling the duties of a Christian and a man, and never will I consent to lead the poor simple creatures who may look up to me to guilt and destruction, in order to secure a right which I will assert by nobler means. You are mistaken if you think thus to tempt me to act against my conscience. The oppressor and the oppressed are everywhere to be found, yet it is not for every paltry vexation that the yoke is to be thrown off; it is not our own morbid tempers we must consult, which equally magnify the suffering and the means of deliverance. When the chain, become too galling for man to wear, without degrading himself to a brute, is to be rent asunder, a voice, as from heaven, thrills in every ear; an impulse, such as he can neither awaken nor resist, warms

every heart; but woe to him who takes advantage of his country's struggles to forward his own selfish views. I can suffer, if so it is appointed me, but it must be without self-reproach. Let me advise you to give up this scheme, as criminal as it is dangerous. You are deluded by the power of imagination; heap not double hardships upon your brethren, by exciting them to resist those they now groan under."

"Advise me!" exclaimed the old man, as soon as his indignation would suffer him to speak—"Shades of his ancestors, hear him! Away with such cold-hearted advisers! Away with those degenerate souls who can talk bravely when danger is distant, but tremble at its approach! I tell you, foolish boy, the die is cast; you may guide the torrent, but you cannot resist it. At this very moment, the brave

fellows are gathering, with firm step and kindling eye; they march to death or victory! I see their dazzling arms—I hear the rolling of their drums, the hymn of triumph bursts on my ear! Fool! fool! that I was," he exclaimed, clenching his hands, and throwing himself on the ground, "to risk so glorious an enterprise on the cool calculations of one who, now the struggle approaches, proves himself a mean-spirited, dastardly traitor." A strong convulsion succeeded to this last sally. Isidore, forgetful of all but the miserable object before him, endeavoured, by throwing water on his face and hands, and opening his vest, to restore him to his senses; the old man struggled long in his arms, rejecting every aid; at length, exhausted nature yielded—the paroxysm passed away, and he lay silent and helpless, his fixed eyes and deep sighs alone

proving that he still lived. The shadows of night were closing fast, before this weakness passed away. Isidore sat by him, anxiously awaiting some favourable sign, continually placing his hand on his heart, and supporting his head on his knees. When he did come to himself, he seemed awakened into a new world, and as if no other desire remained, but for his young friend's escape. "Alas! my son," he cried, "am I fit to plan the deliverance of a nation, who am myself passing like a breath away? But fly! your life is only beginning, it must not again be endangered for me. You may save the lives of many, too; it is impossible for me in my present state to move, and without a command from me, our whole party will rush forward without caution or prudence; take my ring, make the utmost speed to the hermitage of

Father Gabriel. I cannot now explain further, but they will receive you with this sign; charge my brave friends to wait a happier day,—it cannot be far distant, for I have assurances within me, by which I cannot be deceived. Fear not, my son, for me; the Prior's power will always protect me—farewell, they are coming!"

The idea that the rash phrenzy of Father Bernardine might involve many thoughtless victims in ruin, at length prevailed on Isidore, though with extreme reluctance, to leave the old man. There was no time for explanation, or for those inquiries respecting his own affairs, which it was so important for him to make. The gaoler was heard at a distance, locking the various cells, and his approach was so rapid, that he had scarcely time to wrap himself in the Pilgrim's cloak, draw his slouched hat

over his eyes, and seize his staff, before he opened the door to let the Pilgrim out. Yawning and stretching, and uttering some common jokes against the length of the confession, he again bolted and fastened it carefully, without paying any attention to the prisoner, whom, indeed, it was scarcely possible to discover by the light of his dark lantern; and swearing again at the frequent visits of hypocritical friars, he led Isidore to the outer gate, where, as Father Bernardine had informed him, he found the patient mule fastened, and quickly mounting, made the best of his way towards the place to which he had been directed.

CHAPTER XI.

Of no man's presence Isaac felt afraid;
At no man's question Isaac was dismayed:
Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace,
Truth, simple truth, was written in his face.
Yet, while the serious thought his soul approved,
Cheerful he seem'd, and gentleness he loved;
To bliss domestic he his heart resign'd,
And with the firmest had the fondest mind.

CRABBE.

COULD the imagination be brought under control, the sufferings of this world would lose half their poignancy. Not content with actual sorrow, we gather also from the past and the future, and prove, by our readiness to exchange present ease for anticipated evil, that it is natural for man to mourn. How few, in the uncertainty

that involves the greater part of life, allow themselves to indulge in hope—how many lament their joys as lost, when they are perhaps only threatened, and dash the cup of happiness from their lips, in the fear that they shall not be permitted to drain it to the lees Rose found it a difficult task, when Pierre disappeared from her sight, to look forward with much confidence to the success of his mission. It required all the habitual sweetness and gaiety of her disposition, to enable her to bear up before her kind benefactress, and the tears she shed when alone soon manifested their effect upon her pale cheek. It was painful, too, to be forced to acknowledge, that she had perhaps less cause for grief than all around her, for her father's return was now daily expected: yet the youthful heart seldom calculates, and there were moments, though she

would have shrunk from confessing her weakness, when she could not help thinking Isidore was dearer to her than parent, brother, or friend. She had passed through few years of life—a long prospect was widening before her—each year appearing more dreary than the last, since, if separated from him, what scheme of happiness could she form, and youth is fertile in schemes, which, like the fine drawn web of the spider, are destroyed even more quickly than they are formed. Fearful visions of danger and death, or suffering, would cross her mind, and assume all the force of reality. At such a time she would throw herself into Madame Durand's arms, who, too well versed in sorrow, not to know that the terrors of fancy are not to be subdued by argument, would silently press her to her bosom, and pray to him who alone can minister medicine

to the troubled soul. Nor was the fortitude displayed by Monsieur Brunel lost upon the meek spirit of Rose. It was a severe struggle to the aged Christian to witness, hour after hour, the decay of all his hopes, the blasting of what had been once his fondest expectations. He would sit with his eyes fixed on his unhappy child, listening to the wild melody of her tuneful voice, or, leaning on the arm of Rose, follow with feeble steps her uncertain ramblings. Sometimes her look became calm, her eye less uncertain in its glances, and the eager parent clinging to the very shadow of a change, would look breathlessly upon her, waiting the word that should confirm his expectation, till the unmeaning laugh of a maniac, or the senseless lispings of idiotcy sunk him again into despair. But he was never heard to complain; "My friends," he

would say, as he observed the sympathizing looks of Madame Durand and Rose, "I endeavour to look beyond second causes. If the Lord had pleased, he might have laid my gray hairs in the quiet grave before this affliction befel me, and he did not see fit to do so. I am like an aged tree, which, struck by the lightning, is stript of its leaves before the woodman's axe falls upon it: it spreads abroad its scathed branches, shorn of their honours; all the forest is green around it, but the dew of heaven will never make it bud again. Humbly would I bow myself in the dust: the Lord is merciful as well as just; he numbers all our sorrows—not one can fall to us by chance. Oh! that he may soon close my eyes on this sight of woe, and may my last words be, 'Thy will be done.' Believe me, the hour of trial searches deep; we know not what

we make our idol, till the rod of affliction strikes it, and the heart, whose every fibre was wound around it, smarts at the stroke. It is, after passing over the burning sandy desert, that the sound of the rushing stream is delightful to the weary traveller, and it is perhaps from the same force of contrast, that it is so beautifully said by the Apostle, 'The light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' We who mourn now shall, I humbly hope, rejoice hereafter with double joy, and reflect upon the trials we have met with, as the Pilgrim safely housed from the storm that molested him on his journey. We must not, however, be absorbed in our sufferings; life is the season for action, and under no circumstances has man a privilege to isolate himself from his fellow-creatures, either in his pleasures or his pains."

Whenever, therefore, Monsieur Brunel could absent himself from his daughter, who now, though unconsciously, clung to him with pertinacious assiduity, he bent his whole attention to Madame Durand's affairs. The report which had been recently spread, of the Baron's son being still alive, was entirely new to him. He had himself, on his return from Lausanne, made the strictest search, and on finding it ineffectual, concluded with many others, that the Prior had deprived the little innocent of life, or so effectually sunk him in obscurity, as to render all inquiry unavailing; nor was he inclined, at present, to think any hope of the contrary could remain, and therefore studiously endeavoured to check those which Madame Durand was disposed to indulge. He had carefully preserved all the papers relative to the Baron de Courcy's marriage, some of which were of the greatest

importance, and threw a light upon the subject, which nothing but prejudice could resist. These he offered to produce, whenever the affair should be examined, and for this purpose proposed accompanying Madame Durand to Vallerargues, painful as such a journey must be to his feelings. Her advocate had promised, before this interesting cause came on, to visit her at that place, in order that all final information might be given him. Monsieur Brunel was also a witness to the late Baroness's will, by which a special bequest of her large fortune was made to her child by name, under the superintendence of her husband, until he attained his majority, and the Baron was himself the heir in the event of his son's death at an early age.

In the course of the interesting conversations which they held on these subjects,

Monsieur Brunel remembered to have heard, that at least one of the other witnesses of the marriage was some years ago residing at Traissinet de Fourgues, and proposed, as the weather was fine, and the distance moderate, going himself in search of him. Madame Durand, grateful for his kindness, consented, on condition of his allowing himself to be accompanied by a guide, promising every care that could render him easy respecting his daughter, during his absence; and before the close of the day following that on which he set out, he found himself drawing near to the place of his destination; and the cottage of Andore, who had, on a former occasion, so hospitably entertained Vidal and Simon Chas, was soon pointed out to him as the object of his search. The whole family was seated at work before it; even the grandfather of

ninety, whose silver locks fell thinly upon his bent shoulders, was mending a net with which his grandchildren had been that morning amusing themselves in fishing, and his favourite Jeannette, who sat spinning beside him, cheered him at his labour with a simple hymn, of which Monsieur Brunel caught a few of the last lines as he approached the house.

They tell of peace that faith bestows,
Of joy that all may taste,
Which brighter far than pleasure glows,
And smiles amid life's waste.

Alas! when trouble presses near,
And hope itself has flown,
Can that soft spirit quell my fear,
And stifle every groan?

Yes, trembler, since the slave alone
Will truly freedom prize;
And seed that is in sorrow sown,
May yet in joy arise.

Fancy could scarcely paint a scene more rural; even the simple dresses o

the country gave variety to the group thus assembled, and the deep shade of the spreading plane-trees, which overhung with their luxuriant foliage, not only the stone seat they occupied, but the low roof of the cottage, softened the light to the exact degree of picturesque beauty. The father sat at some little distance reading intently, while his wife was knitting near him, her eyes at the same time fixed on her children, who wild with health and spirits were sporting with the large household dogs at their feet. Nor were they less struck with the venerable appearance of the pastor leaning on his young and rustic guide, as he ascended, amid the thick trees, the eminence which led to the village. On the first approach of the stranger all rose to welcome him as such, but it was not without much difficulty that Andore, who had for so long

been impressed with a belief of his death, recognised the altered features of his friend; the old men threw their arms round each other's necks, and wept. There was something peculiarly affecting in this unexpected meeting between persons who had been intimately acquainted in the summer time of life, when comfort and joy surrounded them, and now again met, to relate the tempests which had overshadowed their day even in its meridian.

Every one hastened to welcome the good old man; the best seat was offered him, and as the evening was fine, they spread some refreshments, of which the chief delicacies were chestnuts and white wine, upon a table under the plane-trees. Jeannette seemed particularly to arrest his attention, and as he placed his aged hands in blessing on her head, he turned

to Andore, saying, " I too, my friend, had such a daughter !"

" And you shall have again," said Andore kindly, " my Jeannette cannot object to two fathers, and if she has not love enough for both, I would sooner spare you some of my share." Jeannette blushed deeply, and retired into the house ; none but her father noticed the rising colour, and he only shook his head and sighed. When supper was ended, the good woman and her children withdrew, and the two friends had too much to communicate to continue long silent. Each retraced the steps by which Providence had led him from a state of comparitive happiness, to that in which he was now placed, but neither was inclined to question either the wisdom or the mercy of the dispensation. Andore possessed by nature those talents, which

if properly cultivated, might have raised him to renown, but though deprived of that field of exercise which education would have opened to him, they had not been dormant. The book of nature and of man was always before him, and by experience and observation he had acquired more solid knowledge than the greatest efforts and the most assiduous labour can sometimes inculcate into others. His clear-sighted discrimination too naturally led him to despise those he held intercourse with, but religion checked this pride of character, and he was mercifully taught the hardest of all lessons, to know himself. In other men he saw much that was wrong, in himself he perceived an ever-flowing source of evil, and the first effect of the discovery which led him to the only refuge weak mortals can look to, was to teach him tenderness towards

his fellow-creatures. He turned his eye within, where his discoveries might prove of good account, and he cast the veil, not to hide his own imperfections from his sight, but to cover those of others, when there was nothing else that he could do for them. The troubles which Andore had undergone were such as thousands meet with, an almost imperceptible falling off in his worldly affairs, a gradual sinking from a decent competence to poverty, but the individual feels not his distress the less deeply, because it has not the plea of singularity to excite attention. He did not wonder, that few and evil should be his days on earth, or even complain, like the spoilt child of fortune, who murmurs if but one rose leaf fades upon his path; he was prepared to endure hardships manfully, comforting himself with the idea that the time was short. Under an out-

ward show of coldness there was a warmth of sensibility in his breast that proved the source both of joy and sorrow, and which was especially called forth when he looked upon the faithful partner of his hopes and fears, and four blooming children, with no other support on earth than his labour. "Yet," thought he, "is it my arm protects them? Does my wisdom provide for them? He who makes me the instrument for their good can always support them, as he does the birds of the air; therefore I will not fear, 'for they are of more value than many sparrows.'"

Andore and his guest continued conversing till it was late, compassionating, exhorting, and strengthening each other. Monsieur Brunel seized the first opportunity to lead the conversation to the circumstance of the Baron de Courcy's marriage, and the train of misfortunes that

had since befallen him. Without much difficulty, he prevailed on his friend to accompany him to St. Florent, and even, if necessary, to Vallerargues, as his presence might be so beneficial, and the good old mountaineer shed tears of joy at the idea of again beholding his dear young lady, as he still called Madame Durand, and of his being in his latter years of some service to her, who had formerly shown him much kindness. "I will take my Jeannette with me too," said Andore; "she will like to see the lady, and indeed, my friend, these are not times to leave a young girl like her without a protector."

"Why so?" said Monsieur Brunel, "surely there are peace and tranquillity everywhere now?"

"I know not," said Andore, shaking his head, "strange rumours are afloat, and though I meddle with nothing, and

try to keep peace amongst all, I cannot help but hear sometimes, that which gives me pain. As we are quite alone, I will own to you that there are stirring, unquiet spirits abroad; men who are down themselves, and can, I believe, find no way of getting up again, but like the fox in the well, at the goat's expense. Unfortunately they have succeeded in some measure, for we all know how much easier it is to persuade to evil than to good, and there is an apprehension too, excited on the other side, which bodes harm also, for when once our rulers begin to be much alarmed, they are often induced to be cruelly severe. I have no book-learning, my good Sir, as you have; but I know something of what must have been known before books were invented. Last winter I chanced, on a cold snowy night, to open my door to two strangers, who

begged for hospitality; I felt for them, for I have known the want of it before now; you may be sure they were careful not to tell their names, for bad ones they were, as I have since learnt. They could gather nothing from me if they were spies, as I very much suspect, but every one might not be so silent, and all men's thoughts will not bear to be repeated. However since that time we have been in a state of uneasiness, and a jealousy and suspicion seem to subsist among us that I cannot account for. A few days since, a poor mason, as I am told, fell from a rock at St. Florent, and was dashed to pieces; but before he died had time to confess himself to the Curé, for though he had lived a Protestant, he was born a Roman Catholic. None of course know what his confession was, though many, I believe, could make a shrewd guess of

what he may have told if he chose it, and doubtless he did choose it, if he was promised Paradise for his discoveries. One of the men whom I lodged last winter was then at St. Florent, and the Curé, who knew his master well, sent him off faster than he ever stepped in his life with a letter to him, and has looked, they tell me, very consequential ever since. Besides, soldiers are now quartered in many places where the sight of a musket was a wonder, and though I ask no questions, I can see that a storm is gathering. Take my advice, and carry Madame Durand, since it is so you please to call her, as fast as possible to Vallerargues; people are quiet there; I believe our mountain air fills our brains with strange fancies. But it is all in the Lord's hand, and we often fret and fume at dangers that vanish like smoke."

The good Pastor sighed heavily, as he reflected on the ills which the ambitious, the restless, and the unprincipled had too often produced, by turning the attention of the lower class of Protestants to those wrongs which they had suffered so long, that they scarcely felt them, and he determined to let no opportunity escape of undeceiving the poor creatures who were thus inveigled to their ruin; he also resolved not to mention this additional source of uneasiness to Madame Durand, unless he should afterwards be compelled absolutely to do so. They were interrupted, as he was about to make more particular inquiries, by the approach of a small party of men, women, and children, who had heard of the arrival of a minister of their religion, and long deprived of such a blessing, came to request permission to be present at the prayers which Andore

and his family offered up every evening. This was immediately granted; they grouped themselves under the shade of the plane-trees, and the aged Pastor, with his eyes raised to the starry heavens that canopied them, implored a blessing on the pious exercise in which they were about to engage. He read a portion of scripture, explaining it afterwards, in a manner level to the meanest capacity there, and after a prayer warm from the heart, they joined in singing the twenty-third psalm from the old French version, which is remarkable for its beauty and simplicity. When all was ended, "Go in peace," said the man of God, extending his hands in the act of blessing, "Go in peace, Christian people, and may the God of peace be with you." A calm yet joyful serenity seemed to fill every heart as they withdrew, but it was not before each

one present, even the youngest child, had taken the Pastor by the hand, and offered a wish and a prayer for his happiness. The family then retired to rest, and at an early hour the following morning, the travellers were ready to commence their journey. Andore, who seldom left home, had many directions and exhortations to give, and promising to overtake them on the road, sent forward his companions with their guide.

It was the first time Jeannette had been separated from any of her family, and it was not without difficulty that Monsieur Brunel disengaged her from so many encircling arms and kind farewells. They at length, however, proceeded on, and when her grief was in some measure abated, the conversation turned on poor Louise, and the grateful old man was warm in his thanks for the tenderness

which Andore's whole family had shown her; Jeannette, in her turn, was extremely desirous of receiving some intelligence of Pierre, and of learning the opinion which Monsieur Brunel might have formed respecting him; but her fear of betraying too much interest in the subject rendered her questions obscure, and it did not appear that the old man had attended much to him during the time they travelled together. Before long, Andore joined them, and other topics were started.

On reaching St. Florent, they met with all the kindness which they could desire. Andore was welcomed for his own sake, Jeannette for her father's, and even Louise, they fondly imagined, seemed pleased at being surrounded with so many who felt interested in her comfort. Madame Durand informed them that several circumstances concurred in inducing her to re-

turn almost immediately to Vallerargues. The messenger despatched by Isidore, had mentioned his detention at Millac, and the improbability of his return to St. Florent, and Rose had received a letter from her mother, stating, that Monsieur la Porte had already reached Nismes with the new intendant, and was impatient to embrace his beloved daughter. It was agreed that a message should be left, directing Pierre to follow them, should he come to St. Florent, and Madame Durand was not without hopes, that through Monsieur la Porte's interest with the Count St. Romain, the exemption of Isidore, who could not yet have joined any regiment, might, without much difficulty, be obtained. The earliest day was therefore fixed for their departure, which was compatible with the necessary preparations.

CHAPTER XII.

Smooth runs the water when the brook is deep,
And in his simple guise he harbours treason.
Henry VI. *Part* I.

In the solitude of a prison, Father Bernardine had leisure to consider his situation attentively, and not only to frame his defence, but to perceive with sorrow how many chances there were against its being credited. The night appeared unusually short, and it was not without a shudder, that he heard, on the next morning, the grating bolts of the door drawn slowly back. This time the gaoler entered the cell; surprise and rage were pictured on his usually stupid countenance, when he

perceived the deception that had been practised on him; he shook the old man violently by the arm; though pale, and apparently exhausted, he presented the appearance of a person aroused from a state of insensibility, and by his well feigned incoherence, increased the impatience of the gaoler. At length, as if recollection slowly returned, he feelingly related how the young ruffian, to whom, by command of the Lord Prior, he had come to administer consolation, had overcome and wounded him, and left him nearly lifeless, and exaggerating the sufferings he had incurred in so good a cause, earnestly entreated that some conveyance might be provided to convey him where he should be able to recruit his shattered frame, which was weakened by the struggles he had made, and the vehemence of his disregarded outcries.

The gaoler was not internally ill pleased to hear an excuse advanced, which might exculpate him from the plea of carelessness; but continuing to display the same ferocity of speech and action, he forced the old man to rise, and half dragging him along the corridores, repaired to consult with higher authorities upon so momentous a subject. It was at length agreed by them, over a bottle of wine, that they had no power to detain the Holy Father, however suspicious his conduct might appear; but as it was better to be on the safe side, they resolved to despatch him under a proper escort to the Prior of St. Roc, who had sent him thither, and whose infallible judgment they considered as alone able to decide in a case, which, for obvious reasons, they preferred not making too public. Had they been less attentive to their own justification, and more

quick-sighted into the changes of countenance displayed by their prisoner, his violent agitation would not have escaped observation; but of this they were entirely regardless, and commanding two "archers" to attend, they dismissed Father Bernardine under their care, with a strict recommendation not to think of shriving criminals in that prison again, unless he wished for a longer acquaintance with its internal regulations. Far different was the speed the Father made at present, from that which had led him to press the sides of his mule when on the way to Nismes. The long and wearisome road he lengthened still more, under pretence of the pain he experienced from violent motion; but the live-long day was insufficient to arrange his defence, or to satisfy his own mind with respect to the reception he was likely to receive from

the Prior, though it must be confessed he foreboded no good as its result. At length they reached the Priory, and he was struck with the uncommon bustle that seemed excited there, on the hurrying to and fro of servants, and the mingled sounds of confusion that were heard from every part.

It was scarcely possible for Father Bernardine to have arrived at a more inauspicious moment, or one in which he was less likely to be dismissed without scrutiny. Of this he was soon convinced, for, while the "archers," who had sent to notify their arrival to the Prior, alighting from their wearied steeds, paced the echoing court with an air of superiority which they imagined their military appearance gave them a right to assume over the bareheaded Monks who glided by them; under the plea of fatigue, he

had entered the porter's lodge, and soon drew from the loquacious Francis, who was generous of information, all it was in his power to impart respecting what was passing of new and extraordinary. As, notwithstanding the shrewd guesses and luminous additions of this highly-finished newsmonger, his intelligence was necessarily scanty, we will satisfy the curiosity of the reader, from sources to which the good porter could not possibly have access.

Not many hours had elapsed after the Pilgrim last quitted the Priory, when the Consul of Vallerargues, accompanied by Simon Chas, entered the court, and after some messages carried backwards and forwards, was admitted into the Prior's presence. It was not without some apprehension, indeed, that he dared to encounter the frown on his patron's brow and ventured once more to proffer his

secret intelligence, but he declared that his zeal for the church, the government, and his reverence's interest, would not suffer him to remain silent. He therefore informed the Prior, that his valet de ville Simon, who was below, to vouch for the truth of what he said, had, unknown to him, and at the risk of incurring his utmost displeasure, gone a few days back to the mountains, where fortune had made use of him as an unworthy instrument to reveal a most hellish conspiracy and plot, carrying on against religion and the state; that the pious Curé of St. Florent had, in the death-bed confession of one who had been concerned in it, learnt the particulars, which he charged Simon to convey to his master. This man, before he breathed his last, owned that he had been employed to carry different messages to various parts of the country, the aim of all which

was to prepare the minds of the Protestants to be on the watch against an approaching moment, when a sudden rising at a particular spot which he mentioned, was to be the signal for their co-operation, and of their deliverance from oppression: he had never received written instructions, but could name several of those most deeply implicated, and amongst them, strange as it might appear, were Father Gabriel, whose cell was made a place of concealment for arms and ammunition, and Father Bernardine, who was considered as very active in the affair, though he owned he had not held any personal intercourse with him on the subject.

The delighted Consul, on hearing this narrative, forgot how deserving Simon was of chastisement, and judged it most prudent to lose no time in laying the whole before the Prior. When he had

concluded his deposition, Simon was also summoned, and his testimony, with the perusal of the Curé's note, wrought so far on the Prior's mind, that he immediately despatched a messenger to the governor of the prison at Nismes, to secure the Pilgrim, and took such other measures of precaution as the exigency of the case seemed to demand. By this disclosure, Vidal found himself placed in a capacity for regaining his patron's favour, but the Prior knew him too well to hold out more than vague hopes of his forgiveness; he felt, that the man he had to deal with might be spurred on by fear, but never led by gratitude; and thus giving a motive sufficiently powerful, he ensured his utmost efforts in his service, which would otherwise have been exerted only in his own behalf.

The messenger sent to Nismes, for-

getful that his errand required immediate haste, had not been able to resist the entreaties of a friend whom he met at the bureau d'Octroi, and had by this means rendered himself incapable of delivering his message till the ensuing day, when the Father was ignorantly hastening to the very spot, which a regard to his own safety would have taught him to avoid. In that state of vague uncertainty, which leads us from the little we have heard to imagine how much worse remains untold, Father Bernardine passed the time of waiting, at one moment calculating on the possibility of escape, at another cursing his folly or his fate, which had thrown him into the snare. The tedious interval was not calculated to increase his presence of mind, and the man who had passed his life amidst perils, and despised them—who, from the vehemence of one master-

feeling, was wrought up to attempt deeds from which calculating prudence would have shrunk, trembled at the apprehension of an interview with one whom in his heart he despised; so difficult is it for the very boldest to face half-concealed danger.

At length the summons came, and two lay brothers accompanied him in silence to the Prior's apartment. They immediately retired, while the Pilgrim advanced on a sign made him, and stood in painful expectation of what was to follow. But the wily Superior was cautious not to lose the benefit of any communications he might be tempted to make, and was too well assured of his own power to be hasty in its exercise. "Holy Father," he began, "some strange mistake has, I fear, arisen; I find that the sufferings you have incurred in your zeal to fulfil the commission

with which I charged you, have been misconstrued, and that you are accused by a set of careless, ignorant fellows, with abetting the escape of a villain, whom it was their duty to watch more carefully: in this world we are none of us secure from calumny, and the fairer the reputation, the more anxious are the evil-minded to cast stains upon it." The Pilgrim, in a low voice, muttered something of disregard of man's opinions, and resignation to all that was to be met in a good cause; but the Prior, without appearing to notice what he said, continued in the same tone of kindness: "It is from you I wish to hear the particulars of a transaction, of which the report has but imperfectly reached me; I was told something of your being wounded—sit down by me," pointing to a chair at his right hand, "and compose yourself; you are before your

friend, not your judge." Had not the Pilgrim received some previous information from the Porter, it is possible this specious manner might have thrown him off his guard; as it was, it only served to increase his uneasiness, as it was equally impossible to perceive as to avoid the snares that might be hid under it. He proceeded, however, to relate the occurrences of the past night, as nearly as he could recollect, in words similar to those he had used to the gaoler, adding only his astonishment at not having obtained immediate credit for what was so self-evident. "Strange indeed," said the Prior, while a slight sneer of derision curled his upper lip, "that such a transaction should not carry instant conviction with it; but the Church has great difficulty in persuading many of the truth of her miracles, therefore her servants should

not be much surprised when they meet with the same incredulity. You have no idea, I suppose, of the course which this deluded young man intended to pursue? Where he purposed hiding his shame, after adding to the crime of imbruing his hands in the blood of a fellow-creature, that of basely resisting one whom compassionate motives alone placed in his power?"

The Pilgrim, lifting up his trembling hands towards heaven, warmly expatiated on the improbability of his being possessed of such information, and declared that, as far as he was concerned, the misguided youth should be followed only by his forgiveness, and prayers for his conversion. "Your Christian charity, Father," said the Prior, more gravely, "is to be commended, but that vengeance, which as a minister of peace you must

abhor, the Church, ever anxious for the honour and welfare of her votaries, undertakes for them, and by to-morrow's dawn you may expect to witness, in the court of the Priory, the punishment of your enemy."

"What does your lordship mean?" exclaimed the Pilgrim eagerly.

"I mean," replied the Prior, "that young Isidore Delorme, who has I find in so many ways manifested his guilt, will soon be in my power, and there are few who have been so," he haughtily added, "that ever escape to tell how they like the situation."

"My lord," cried the Pilgrim, losing all caution in his eagerness; "my lord, I entreat you to pause, consider his youth—"

"The Church," replied the Prior, in the same tone, "in mercy cuts off the offender, lest he should fill up the mea-

sure of his transgressions. I am astonished at having to remind you of this her doctrine."

"But," said the Pilgrim, "his commission of the murder is not yet established, surely some trial is necessary."

"You are witness to one daring deed," was the Prior's reply, "yet I cannot but own," he added after a pause, "that this extreme anxiety appears strange to me; have you known this young man, about whom you appear so deeply interested?"

"From his cradle," replied the Pilgrim, with imprudent zeal, "I have been as a father to him, and he has repaid my care with the affection and solicitude of a son. Judge, my lord, after your own heart, if I can now desert him in his need." The Prior smiled significantly, but said, "In thus speaking you seal his condemnation; is the wretch worthy of being spared,

who, in return for care and affection, attempts your life, and basely leaves you to answer for a crime of which he is guilty. No, no; say no more—you do but add fuel to my indignation."

"Hear me but this once, my lord," exclaimed the Pilgrim, "should I be able to produce before you the real assassin?—Should I be able to prove the youth as innocent of this offence as of every other of which he may be accused——"

"These subterfuges, Father, are of no avail," answered the Prior, "and the mystery by which you pretend to mislead me only confirms suspicions, that till now I have endeavoured to banish from my breast. If you are conscious of his innocence, you are accessory to his escape, and if accessory, it must be from some powerful motive, which my duty compels me to search to the bottom."

"And are charity and compassion nothing in your estimation, my lord," replied the Pilgrim, "that you imagine self-interest must have actuated one already dropping into the grave, where all interest ceases?" A look of contempt passed rapidly over the Prior's countenance. "We know each other too well," he replied, "for such base coin to pass current between us; perhaps you desire that I should refresh your memory a little; but I will not act as if I took you for a fool, though I begin strongly to suspect you of being a knave. This play at cross purposes begins to weary me; I am not used to be thus trifled with; let us come at once to the point, and by a free confession, at least deserve your pardon."

The Pilgrim rose from his seat, and placing himself so as to front the Prior, appeared for some time to search in his

countenance, what hope he might indulge if he followed his advice; but nothing was to be seen there, save the stern haughtiness of a man about to assert his superiority. No impatient expectation, no look of curiosity, no shade of cautious reserve; he seemed to dare the scrutiny, and to have banished all expression which might betray his inward thoughts. A motion which the Prior made, as if with the intent to rise, recalled the Father to the necessity of prompt decision, and at length, in a low and hurried voice, he thus began: "You require a free and full confession, and I will speak as if my last breath expired with my words. I was the instrument of young Delorme's escape, because I knew him to be innocent; I knew that this right arm dealt the blow. Yet beware how you lay hands on me, since with my life

you lose every hope of ascertaining the existence of the rightful heir of your sister's wealth, and of timely securing him in your power. I have long I own deceived you, and no one but myself can unravel the web I have woven. Judge now between us, which has most cause to tremble!" and he shook back his long white hair, and stood upright in the attitude of one who threatens, rather than one who fears. Surprise for some moments kept the Prior silent. That for so many years he should have been the dupe of a travelling beggar, subsisting often upon his bounty; that at the very time this wretch seemed most completely involved in his own toils, he should not only scorn submission, but fling a haughty defiance against him, were insults not to be borne, and, forgetful of that outward appearance of dignity it had ever been his study to maintain, he sprang

towards the old man, and seizing him violently by the arm, swore by every oath that men hold sacred, to force him to confess what he knew, or take his life as a forfeit. "And think you," said the Pilgrim, with a degree of coolness which still more irritated the Prior's fury, "that I am such an idiot as to have risked the discovery without being first assured that my death could profit you nothing, but that you could gain all by my life? You have just reminded me of past transactions; am I such a stranger to the Prior of St. Roc, as to expect any mercy from his good feelings? No, my lord, you have in this instance been mistaken; I played a sure game, and my master-puppet was the man, who, from the awful sanctuary of his retirement, fancied he was guiding all events according to the preconceived plans of his inventive genius. The very

moment that life forsakes my body, the secret which it so much imports you to keep concealed, becomes unavoidably public, and the shepherd-boy seizes on the property you have so generously been amassing for him. Set me free, trust to my forbearance, and you will gain more than by the utmost stretch of your power."

"May confusion seize me, before I yield to such a base proposal!" exclaimed the infuriated Prior. "The utmost stretch of my power! and do you dare it, infamous villain, before you know what that is? Has your heroism calculated on the security I shall feel in your long-dying life, in the prolongation of your existence in such agony, that you will be ready to purchase release by every abject concession I can dictate? I will no longer waste time in words, and delay my ven-

geance;" then ringing a small bell which stood before his crucifix, the two lay brothers immediately appeared. "Seize on that wretch, and follow me," cried the Prior, "he has confessed being privy to the prisoner's escape, but my strongest solicitations have not been able to obtain more from him—other methods must be tried."

The attendants did as they were commanded, and nature for a moment obtaining the mastery, sent the blood from the Pilgrim's cheek, and dimmed his eye of fire; it was but for a moment, and he blushed at the short-lived weakness. Meanwhile, the Prior, opening an ancient scrutoire, took from thence a large key, and lighting his lamp at the consecrated taper, preceded the lay brothers, who, with a strong grasp, forced Father Bernardine along with them, down a stone staircase to the

dungeons of the Priory. It seemed as if they had been long disused, for the lock yielded only to force, and the door opened with difficulty to receive a new victim. The instruments of torture spread around were sufficient to appal the strongest minds: on the ground was placed that which was distinguished by the name of the Ceps, so well known in the accounts of the persecutions which the Protestants suffered in that country. Other tortures might be more acute—this, by a refinement of cruelty, wore out the strength and patience by which alone such suffering could be endured: it forced its victims to remain constantly in an attitude so distressing, that they could neither sit nor stand without excessive pain, and even when the wearied persecutor released his prey, many bore with them to their graves the marks of this horrid punishment.

In the low vault they entered, the lamp would scarcely burn; so noxious was the air in which a human being was about to be compelled to breathe, and the damp unwholesome smell that issued from it almost prevented the assistants from advancing. But no sooner had Father Bernardine perceived the well-known Ceps, than it seemed as if all his enthusiasm returned upon him, and the recollections of former times strung his nerves with renewed vigour. "Heaven be praised!" he exclaimed, "that I am found worthy, though, for a meaner cause, to bear that yoke under which so many martyrs have bowed. If your hands, unused to the work, are unavailing, I will myself fasten the irons, and know, proud churchman, that the utmost of your power is only used in providing me with the means of

tormenting this poor tabernacle of clay, against which I have long declared perpetual war: the spirits of the saints of old, whom your predecessors in authority and cruelty sacrificed in other times, will watch over me, and when they see my firmness, they will not be ashamed to call me brother." The Prior would have been better pleased, had his prisoner shrunk overawed from the spectacle, but man can overcome all things, save the soul of man. "This courage will not last long," he thought, and making a sign to his attendants, left the vault. He did not, however, retire far, but pacing up and down the corridor, listened to the smothered groan which burst from the undaunted old man, when the heavy stroke fixed the instrument of torture; he heard the clap of the iron door repeated by a hundred echoes, when

they left him to his fate—he watched the glimmer of the lamp they bore as it flashed against the arched roof, and retired without one pang of remorse at the agony in which he had left a fellow-creature to linger.

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